Justin Leonard. I had the pleasure of meeting and playing with Justin in the Pro-Am 1997 Kemper Open on June 4. The team on which Justin and I played included Bill Schatz of Chagrin Falls, OH, Spencer Rankin of Green Brook, NJ, and William Zanoni of Glenview, IL. We finished third in the tournament, and several days later, Justin went on to win the Kemper Open.

Justin, like Tiger Woods, Robert Damron, and many other young golfers, is redefining the game of golf and making it more appealing to members of his generation. In just 3 years as a professional on the PGA Tour, Justin has amassed performances and wins in some difficult and prestigious tournaments. In addition to the 1997 Kemper Open, Justin's tour victories and accomplishments have included a win in the 1996 Buick Open, a fifth place finish at the 1996 PGA Championship, sixth at the 1997 Masters Tournament, fifth at the 1997 Saint Jude Classic, and third at last week's 1997 Western Open in Lemont, IL. Fellow golfer and PGA pro, Tom Kite has said of him, ''I have never seen a player his age so polished.''

Justin's amateur record is just as stellar as his professional accomplishments. In 1992, he won the U.S. Amateur Championship and in 1994, while at the University of Texas, he became the NCAA Champion. Justin has also been a member of national teams such as the 1992 U.S. World Amateur, the 1993 Walker Cup, and the 1996 President's Cup.

I am proud to say that Justin is a resident professional golfer at South Carolina's Kiawah Island Resort in Charleston, one of the counties I am proud to represent in this body. He is truly an asset to my home State of South Carolina and a role model for the youth of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly associate myself with Tom Kite's description of Justin Leonard and ask that the Members of the House of Representatives join me in saluting Mr. Leonard for his outstanding accomplishments and wishing him well in his future endeavors.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND TEAM

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 1997

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the following article to my colleagues.

I am proud to join the city of Shadyside, OH, in congratulating the Shadyside Odyssey of the Mind Classics team in taking top honors at the world competition. This eighth grade team captured the world crown in the ''Can You Dig It?'' division II category by performing a skit, song, and dance which presented them as an archeologist and people from ancient civilizations in order to interpret the Can You Dig It? problem. Team members included Laura Kaluger, Megan Landerholm, Jessica Melankao, Natasha Minwer, Mary Ostrander; Dave Runyon, with Lori and Marty Runyon, and Blanche Ostrander acted as coaches.

This Odyssey of the Mind team competed against 62 other teams in their Division to take the world title for the first time. The students and their coaches practiced diligently to prepare for this competition, and their hard work was rewarded with a well-deserved victory. I am proud of the students' successful performance as well as the support the community of Shadyside gave to the team by helping them raise money to cover the costs of the competition.

The members of the Shadyside Odyssey of the Mind team have set an example of academic excellence for other students to follow. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in congratulating the Shadyside Odyssey of the Mind team and recognizing their hard work and perseverance.

IN MEMORY OF ANDREW J. KOCERKA

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Andrew J. Kocerka, a union man, a family man, and a great American from Cleveland, OH.

Mr. Kocerka devoted his life to the cause of the common person. He spent much of his life defending working people. His commitment to the plight of ordinary individuals is reflected in his dedication to the United Auto Workers, of which he became president of local no. 1045. He will be much loved and remembered by the members of that organization.

Mr. Kocerka is survived by sister Helen Skvarch, and brothers Jack and George, as well as many nieces and nephews.

THE BUDGET

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 9, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, July 2, 1997 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

MAJOR BUDGET VOTES

Last week the House passed two major budget bills—one to reduce spending in order to balance the budget and the other to provide tax relief for Americans. Many hurdles lie ahead for both, as differences with the Senate and President need to be worked out. But the House action at least moves the process forward as we continue our effort to finally balance the federal budget.

BACKGROUND

The overall package was based on the May 2 budget agreement between President Clinton and congressional leaders which outlined a plan to balance the budget over the next five years as well as provide some tax cuts.

Balancing the budget would be a major accomplishment. For the past several years, deficit politics have dominated the congressional agenda. Finally balancing the budget would show that the federal government can get its fiscal house in order and it would help the economy in a variety of ways: lowering interest rates and the trade deficit, while boosting savings and economic growth.

Major progress has already been made in reducing the budget deficit. The 1993 deficit reduction package, which I supported, has helped reduce it from a record $290 billion in 1992 to around $60 billion this year. The May budget agreement would finish the task and produce a balanced budget by 2002. Yet that agreement was only a broad outline. The specifics were worked out by various congressional committees, and that is what we voted on last week.

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

Most of the savings needed to balance the budget would come from the budget reconciliation bill making changes in various entitlement programs. Changes in Medicare represent the bulk of the bill's savings—$115 billion out of a total of $140 billion. The Medicare savings come largely from reducing payments to hospitals and other health providers and from opening the health insurance program to greater competition. Other changes in the House bill deal with Medicaid payments to hospitals and federal retirement plans.

With my support, this bill passed by a solid margin. It is by no means a perfect package. But I strongly believe in balancing the budget—particularly through spending reductions rather than tax increases—and this was the main bill for achieving those savings. The changes were much more modest than those proposed in recent years; the Medicare savings were well below half of the $270 billion in cutbacks Speaker Gingrich tried to get through last Congress. The Medicare savings are projected to keep the program solvent over the next 10 years, and they have been supported by key older persons' groups.

MAJORITY TAX CUT

The second major vote last week was on the Republican tax cut bill. It contained $133 billion in tax cuts over five years, offset by $48 billion in tax increases, for a net tax cut of $85 billion. It would provide a $500 per child tax credit, give new tax credits for education costs, expand penalty-free withdrawals from IRAs, reduce capital gains taxes, and gradually raise to $1 million the amount exempt from federal estate taxes. To increase revenues it would expand existing taxes on airline tickets.

Although this bill had several good features, I opposed it. Its benefits were tilted far too much to the wealthy. According to Treasury Department estimates, the wealthiest 20% of Americans would get almost 70% of the tax cuts when fully phased in. In addition, the costs of the tax cuts increase sharply in the outyears, seriously undermining our effort to have a balanced budget. The various tax cuts were designed to have modest costs between now and 2002—$85 billion—but they would double over the next five years and then explode to an additional $650-700 billion over the next 10 years. That means we could balance the budget in the year 2002 but then run large deficits after that. We need to balance the budget and keep it balanced.

MINORITY TAX CUT

The alternative tax cut plan proposed by the Democrats would provide greater tax breaks for education. It would retain the $500 per child tax credit, but limit it to families making less than $75,000, rather than $110,000 under the Majority bill. It also targets the capital gains and estate tax cuts to small businesses, family farms, and homeowners. Most of the tax cuts in this plan would benefit middle-income Americans.

This was the toughest vote of the three for me, but I supported this plan. Unfortunately it was defeated and the other version passed. My preference is not to have a tax cut at this time: It is quite possible that all of the spending cuts won't materialize to give us a balanced budget, and balancing the budget is a higher priority than cutting taxes. We shouldn't be paying for a tax cut by borrowing more money. However, the debate has moved beyond that, and the question before us was what kind of tax cuts are preferable.