physician self-referral law by next spring. At this juncture, it would be deeply irresponsible to enact legislation that effectively repeals the heart of the law—which is the Federal Government's ability to require fair-market value parameters for compensation arrangements between providers.

If the law is repealed, taxpayers will again be forced to foot the bill for billions of dollars in provision of unnecessary services. Enactment of the Thomas proposal would shorten Medicare's life and return us to the days of the 1980's, when physicians created sham joint ventures to which they steered their patients for unnecessary, expensive, and even painful tests.

I hope that we will not go down that road.

THE MEDICARE PHYSICIAN SELF-REFERRAL IMPROVEMENT ACT

BILL SUMMARY

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 introduced by Rep. Stark refines the self-referral laws in a number of ways. Below is a summary of the bill that highlights major provisions in current law and major changes that this legislation makes to those provisions.

Current law bans compensation between doctors and providers in certain designated health services areas. It is designed to provide a ''bright line'' in the law and to avoid requiring the government to investigate difficult ''kickback'' cases. The current law includes many complex exceptions to the total ban.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would replace most of the compensation exceptions with a single ''Fair Market Value'' test. It would maintain the exceptions to the ban for physician recruitment and de minimis gifts. Under the fair market value test, an agreement must be in writing, for a definite period of time, and not be dependent on the volume or value of referrals. The compensation in the contract must be a reasonable ''fair market'' rate.

Current law requires ''direct supervision'' by referring physicians of those providing designated health services to qualify for the in-office ancillary service exception.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would require general supervision which is a less stringent standard than current law, but it would require that generally the physician be on the premises.

Current law provides a general managed care exemption.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would clarify that the managed care exemption extends to Medicaid managed care plans and Medicare+Choice organizations.

Current law provides an exception from the law in instances where no alternative provider is available.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would change that exception so that the Secretary of Health and Human Services would determine whether an area is underserved and therefore needed such an exception.

Current law requires reporting of provider financial relationships and those of their immediate families, and institutes civil monetary penalties for failure to comply with such reporting requirements.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would repeal that reporting requirement and replace it with a requirement that physicians have records available for audit purposes. It would also abolish the civil monetary penalties that go along with the current financial relationship reporting requirement.

Current law provides a list of designated health services that are covered by the self-referral ban.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would remove eyeglasses and lenses from the list and would clarify that the law does not cover ambulatory surgical centers or hospices.

Current law requires HCFA to provide advisory opinions upon request, but has no deadline for their completion.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would require that advisory opinions be answered by HCFA within 60 days.

Current law forbids providers from providing DME and parenteral and enteral nutrients as part of the in-office ancillary exception.

The Medicare Physician Self-Referral Improvement Act of 1999 would eliminate the ban.

RPS, INC. RECOGNIZED IN CONGRESS

HON. FRANK MASCARA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thurday, July 29, 1999

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a company in my district, RPS, Inc., an FDX Company. This company has grown in less than 15 years to become the second largest small-package carrier in North America, and has established a reputation for efficient, affordable, and safe service.

RPS is a major employer and business operating in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania. Its headquarters have been located outside of Pittsburgh since the company was started in 1985 by President and CEO Daniel J. Sullivan. Since then, RPS has been one of the fastest growing companies in the transportation industry and currently employs over 30,000 people nationally, and ships over 1.4 million packages a day. In 1996 the company became the first small-package carrier to offer service to every business address in North America. One reason for the company's outstanding success is rooted in its commitment to technological innovation and emphasis on safe, reliable service.

Recently, RPS was awarded the 1999 Parcel Delivery Carrier of the Year by the National Small Shipments Traffic Conference (NASSTRAC), an organization of shipping executives and industry peers. In the Parcel Delivery category, this honor was bestowed solely upon RPS for its outstanding industry innovations, leadership, technology, on-time performance, service to customers, and sales support. The significance of this award is that industry professionals and peers deemed RPS to be the best in the industry, above all competitors.

In addition, the company and its employees have been recognized for their unparalleled safety record and efficient service to customers. The American Trucking Association recently named two RPS drivers, Keith Herzig and Vicki Carpenter, as Road Team Captains. This title is conferred upon 12 elite drivers annually for their exemplary safety and service records. Furthermore, RPS won the American Trucking Association's National Truck Safety Contest in 1998 or having the fewest number of accidents in the 20 million miles hauled category. RPS can serve as an example to other companies in industries which operate heavily on our nation's highways.

I am honored to have such a fine company in my district and to represent them in Congress. I am certain RPS will continue to have a long and successful future serving America's business transportation needs.

THE ANNUNCIATION PARISH COMMUNITY

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration of the Annunciation Parish Community as it celebrates its 75th year of dedicated service to the West Cleveland community.

The Annunciation Parish Community, through its ''willingness to bear Jesus to the world,'' has served as a center for the religious expression and the spiritual growth of the West 130th and Bennington communities.

Through the rite of Baptism as well as conversions, Annunciation has brought many members of the community into the Catholic faith. Throughout the years, Annunciation has served as a center of spiritual and religious growth within the community through the rites of Eucharist and Confirmation. Also, Annunciation unites Catholic members of the community through marriage, offers spiritual pardons through confession, as well as memorializes the deceased through Christian burial.

Annunciation has also educated generations of young men, women and children who have passed through the residential school over the last seventy-five years. in addition to teaching children the fundamental academic disciplines, Annunciation has taught the importance of service to the community. Currently, Annunciation is involved in helping to bring the Bellaire-Puritas Development Corporation and the Meals-On-Wheels to the area, providing their end of the month Neighborhood Meal, and monthly Food Collection and Hunger Collection, both of which are very supportive of the West Park Community Cupboard.

It is evident that the Annunciation Parish Community has, over the years, played a crucial role in the community, and that its many years of service have been an invaluable contribution to the West Cleveland community.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE PLEASANTON LIONS CLUB'S CAMPAIGN TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT SCLERODERMA

HON. ELLEN O. TAUSCHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mrs. TAUSCHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues a disease known as scleroderma that an estimated 500,000 Americans currently suffer from. Even though more people have this disease than have Muscular Dystrophy, Multiple Sclerosis or Cystic Fibrosis, Scleroderma, unfortunately, is not that well known by the public.

Scleroderma literally means ''hard skin'' and is a chronic disorder that leads to the overproduction of collagen in the body's connective tissue. It can also effect internal organs, causing severe damage and serious complications to the body's digestive, circulatory and immune system. Scleroderma is not contagious or directly hereditary nor is it gender, race or age specific. However, 80% of its victims are women, most in the prime of their lives. Unfortunately, there is no known cause or cure for scleroderma.

I would like to commend the Pleasanton Lions Club within the 10th Congressional District for taking it upon themselves to raise awareness about Scleroderma. Thanks to a request being made by the Pleasanton Lions Club, the Pleasanton City Council on May 18 of this year proclaimed the month of June as ''Scleroderma Awareness Month.'' Also in conjunction with downtown events in Plesanton, the Pleasanton Lions Club sponsors a booth offering information about the disease that also involves members from the Scleroderma Support Group in the Bay Area who share their stories with the public.

The Pleasanton Lions Club has also established informational displays along with literature at the Pleasanton Library, the Lion's Club visitor/ticket office, the Valleycare Library, Valleycare Mental Center, the Pleasanton Senior Center and the Livermore Veterans Hospital.

On June 11, the Pleasanton Lions Club sponsored their 11th annual golf tournamaent and dinner to help raise money for scleroderma research. I have been told that the tournament and the subsequent dinner were a roaring success.

It is important that scleroderma be given the attention required to raise awareness and the funds needed to fight this chronic disease. The Pleasanton Lions Club have played a major role in this effort and I thank them for it. I hope others will follow their lead and get the word out to the public about why we need to fight scleroderma.

SALARIES FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the issue of salaries for Members of Congress.

I have spoken time and again about my frustration of having to deal with the issue of automatic cost of living increases for Members of Congress each year. This year was no exception.

Representing a mostly rural district in Kentucky, I believe that I am fairly compensated for my services. It is an honor for me to represent the Second District.

It is important, at a time like this, for us to not lose sight of the fact that in the past several years we have ask America to sacrifice in order to balanced the federal budget. While we, in Congress, have made great strides toward this goal, our job is not yet complete.

I continue to be concerned with the process in which these cost of living adjustments are made. I would rather Congress take an up or down vote on all pay adjustments for Members and have cosponsored legislation to eliminate the cost of living provision all together. This was the manner in which Congress did business for over one hundred and fifty years.

This is the first time in five years I have voted for a cost of living increase. I have to recognize that many of my colleagues are not fortunate enough to live in a low cost area such as the Second District of Kentucky.

This increase is not just for Members of Congress but for the thousands of federal judges and civil service administrators which are leaving at an alarming rate for the private sector. This exodus is depriving the government of some of the best and brightest that we have to offer.

Mr. Speaker, while I supported the increase for these reasons this time, I will not accept it personally. I intend to contribute my share of the cost of living increase to worthwhile causes in the Second District of Kentucky.

TRIBUTE TO ALBERT SADOW

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Police Chief Albert Sadow who retired from Hazel Park, Michigan's Police Department on July 14, 1999, bringing closure to 38 years of distinguished public service.

Chief Sadow's career with the City of Hazel Park dates back to 1961 when he worked for the Water and Sewer Department at the hourly rate of $1.67. In addition to holding the civilian posts of Assistant City Manager and Personnel Director, Chief Sadow rose through the ranks of the Police Department from Patrolman to Sergeant to Lieutenant, and finally to Chief in 1985.

Under Chief Sadow's leadership, the City of Hazel Park profited from many positive changes and innovations in public safety. Through the acquisition of state and federal funds, Chief Sadow brought the Hazel Park Police Department into the 21st Century by installing video display terminals, video cameras, radar units and state-of-the-art computer systems in every police cruiser.

Other programs instituted during Chief Sadow's tenure include the Southeast Oakland Crime Suppression Task Force, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE), the K–9 unit, Motor Vehicle Carrier and Bicycle Patrol.

In his 38 years of service, Albert Sadow never used a sick day, and has been a tireless, and dedicated public servant. Indeed, Hazel Park is as better and safer place thanks to Chief Sadow.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing my friend, Albert Sadow, good health and happiness as he and his wife, Virginia, trade in his police car for their motor home, and spend their retirement visiting their three grown children and enjoying life together.

HONORING JUDGE FRANK M. JOHNSON, JR.

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, We are a country of strong men united by great philosophies, yet we are divided by realities that built this country by stripping a people of their land in order to call it our own and by enslaving another people to a lifelong labor of blood and sweat to build our homes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on the brink of a new millennium, not to point out the immaculate flaws of our cherished American dream. Rather, I rise to salute Judge Frank M. Johnson, Jr., a man who Time Magazine in 1967 deemed ''one of the most important men in America'' and whose life exemplifies the Biblical statement ''To whom much is given, much is required.''

Judge Johnson is a man who dedicated more than four decades of his life to ensuring that no man be limited by separate facilities that inherently violate his right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. He is an American icon, a legendary Federal jurist from Alabama whose historic civil rights decisions forever shattered segregation in a ''Jim Crow'' South. His monumental ruling striking down the Montgomery bus-segregation law as unconstitutional created a broad mandate for racial justice that eternally eliminated segregation in public schools and colleges, bathrooms, restaurants and other public facilities in Alabama and across the South. Judge Johnson was an innovator and a crusader for all mankind who will be remembered eternally for giving true meaning to the word justice.

Today, I rise to honor Judge Johnson for helping to bring equality to the American dream; I honor him for bringing justice to an inhumane system of law; I honor him like Martin Luther King, Jr., for allowing justice and righteousness to roll down like a mighty stream.

AMENDMENT TO CZECH CITIZENSHIP LAW PRAISED

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 29, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address an issue I have raised in this Chamber many times before: the Czech citizenship law. For 5 years, as a member of the Helsinki Commission, I have argued that the law adopted when the Czechoslovak Federal Republic dissolved, on January 1, 1993, was designed to and had the effect of leaving tens of thousands of former Czechoslovaks de jure or de facto stateless. I have argued, and as Czech officials eventually admitted, all of those people were members of the Romani minority. And I have argued that to have a law with such a narrow and discriminatory impact was no accident. Most of all, I have argued that this law needed to be changed.

In 1996, the law was amended in an effort to placate international critics of the law, but that amendment was mere window dressing