the university. I ask you and my House colleagues to join me in recognizing this community servant and spokesman for the working men and women of northern Michigan.

TRIBUTE TO BUD GARDNER

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, this past February, Scotland County lost one of its finest law enforcement officers. Henry ''Bud'' Gardner was a police officer for 37 years in Laurinburg, North Carolina. Bud served his community with pride and honor and will be missed. The citizens of Laurinburg will always be grateful for his loyal service.

He is survived by his wife, Kathleen, of 57 years. Barbara and I join the Laurinburg community in prayer for Bud's family and friends during this difficult time.

PROTECTING MUTUAL INSURANCE POLICYHOLDERS

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join today with my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. FRANK, in introducing the ''Protection of Policyholders Act.'' This legislation seeks to strike provisions in current law that undermine the ownership rights of millions of policyholders in mutual insurance companies and severely weaken State regulation of insurance.

In recent years, some 70 million Americans have learned that they own a valuable asset that few had previously been aware of—their insurance policies with mutual insurance companies. As policyholders, they collectively own 100 percent of mutual insurance companies, which were structured under state law as cooperatively-owned corporations. Until recently, mutual companies could convert to stock ownership, but State law required that the company's accumulated profits be divided among policyholders by giving them 100 percent of the stock in the new company. These shares would then pay stock dividends and could appreciate in value like regular corporate stock.

Over the past decade, the mutual insurance industry has sought to change state laws to permit mutual companies to convert to stock ownership without distributing stock to policyholders. Under these revised state laws, mutual companies could form ''hybrid'' mutual holding companies in which policyholders would continue to own 51% of the insurance company through a non-insurance mutual holding company. The remaining 49% ownership of the insurance company would be sold as stock to investors, most often to the former officers and directors of the mutual company. Where this has occurred, policyholders have not received any stock or any benefit of the dividends paid by the new insurance subsidiary of the mutual holding company. Moreover, policyholders often experience insurance rate increases to cover the costs of paying competitive dividends to the new stockholders.

A number of states, including New York, Massachusetts, Illinois, Indiana and others, refused to enact these mutual conversion changes out of fairness to policyholders and concerns about appropriate regulation of these hybrid corporate structures. The insurance industry responded by inserting in the comprehensive financial reform legislation Congress enacted in 1999, a provision that would permit state-chartered mutual companies to relocate to another state with more liberal conversion rules without jeopardizing their licenses, operations, or insurance policies. This controversial provision was adopted by the House only because it was paired in a floor amendment with a broadly supported provision to prohibit discrimination in insurance sales against victims of domestic violence.

These so-called mutual ''redomestication'' provisions of the 1999 Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act now permit a mutually owned insurance company that cannot convert to stock ownership, or cannot convert without distributing 100 percent of the stock to policyholders, to relocate to another state that permits such conversions. Federal law has become the instrument for overturning pro-consumer state insurance law and an accomplice in robbing mutual policyholders of their ownership fights.

The mutual redomestication provisions in current Federal law now empower mutual insurance companies to blackmail state legislatures, saying, in essence, if you don't enact the conversion laws we want, we'll simply move to another state. Despite a 200-year tradition of state regulation of insurance, these provisions strip states of their right to regulate insurance companies as they deem appropriate and rob policyholders of valuable ownership rights. These provisions are anti-State, they are anti-consumer, and they should be repealed by Congress.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, July 27, 2001, I was unable to be present for rollcall vote No. 96. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on rollcall No. 96 in favor of H.R. 476, the Child Custody Protection Act.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to return to Congress on Tuesday, April 16, 2002, and Wednesday April 17, 2002, due to a death in my family. Had I been present, the record would reflect that I would have voted: On roll 93, H.R. 1374, Philip E. Ruppe Post office Designation—''yea''; on roll 94, H.R. 4156, Clergy Housing Allowance Clarification—''yea''; on roll 95, H.R. 4157, Family Farmer Bankruptcy Extension Act—''yea.''

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, due to needs within our family, I was unable to be present for rollcall No. 86 last Wednesday, April 11, as well as rollcalls Nos. 93, 94 and 95 on Tuesday, April 16. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yea'' on rollcalls Nos. 86, 93, 94 and 95.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 95, H.R. 4167, had I been present, I would have voted ''yea.''

CLERGY HOUSING ALLOWANCE CLARIFICATION ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 16, 2002

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4156, the Clergy Allowance Clarification Act. In western Wisconsin, I have personally witnessed the effective and invaluable efforts put forth by religious organizations. Not only do they lead congregations in worship, they also help combat such traumas as drug-addiction and domestic abuse. Our Nation's clergy are worthy of our continual appreciation and praise.

But more importantly, our Nation's clergy are worthy of our support. Since the 1920s, Congress has allowed members of the clergy to exclude from taxable income a portion of their church income that is used for housing. This provision in the tax code has helped churches of all faiths expand their community outreach activities and provided clergy members with a much deserved tax break.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4156 will clarify current law to allow our clergy to continue to receive this important tax benefit. I urge all of my colleagues to join with me in supporting this important piece of legislation. Our nation's clergy deserve our continued support.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE DONOVAN JOHNSON

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 17, 2002

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in tribute to Mike Donovan Johnson, the Local 522's City Vice President, for eleven years, of the Sacramento Area Firefighters Union. Mike is retiring after thirty-three years of outstanding service to the City of Sacramento Fire Department.