

both high school and college. She taught school in Panama for 7 years. In 1971, Hilma married and, now, has one daughter, Gavianna. In 1974, she immigrated to the United States and settled in Brooklyn. Her first job was at the Ace of Suede Leather Cleaners where she worked for 10 years.

Hilma's command of the English language needed a lot of work and with the assistance of her daughter, she read and studied constantly to improve her grammar, diction, and general ability to communicate in English. In 1984, she applied for a job with the New York Board of Education to fulfill her dream of teaching again. She was assigned to work as an educational assistant in 1985 at Walt Whitman I.S. 246. Her work included visits to the homes of students who were chronic absentees to encourage their consistent attendance. She took advantage of the Board of Education's Career Ladder program to become a teacher, graduating in 1989 from the College of New Rochelle with a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring in Education and Psychology. In addition, she completed a Masters in Guidance and Counseling and an Advanced Certificate in Guidance and Counseling. Upon completing both degrees she received the prestigious Lester Crow Award and was offered an adjunct position in the Guidance Graduate program.

In 1992, Hilma was assigned to Abraham Lincoln High School as a Bilingual Spanish Guidance Counselor and is there today. She has worked with students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds. She coordinates "La Herencia Hispana (Lincoln's 1st Spanish Club), the Young Scholars program, The Choice Program, the Liberty Partnerships program with Kingsborough Community College just to name a few. At Lincoln High School, she has also taught Art Appreciation in the after-school program in addition to serving as a full-time Guidance counselor. She participates in Lincoln's Key Club-European Exchange program traveling with the club members to Italy, Austria, Czech Republic, and recently to Denmark.

Lastly, Hilma is a Jehovah Witness and dedicates time to helping others understand the Bible. She is the proud grandmother of grandson Kumar, and the mother-in-law of Jerome.

Mr. Speaker, Hilma Shannon serves as an inspiration to us all through her accomplishments and commitment to educating our children. As such, she is more than worthy of receiving our recognition today, and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring this truly remarkable person.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1350,
INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT
OF 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 19, 2004

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 1350, the Conference Report to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA).

I commend the House and Senate conferees for putting the best interests of the stu-

dents first in this reauthorization and reaching a compromise between parents, teachers, school administrators, and school districts. This legislation has my support because it responds to the needs of special education teachers and the children they serve.

My vote in favor of H.R. 1350 when it passed the House originally was because of the work our committee did on provisions improving early identification and the goal for full funding. Yet I did have strong reservations about the sections pertaining to discipline and the definition of highly qualified teachers. At the time, I was assured that my concerns and those of my colleagues would be addressed in the Conference Committee. The conferees were able to craft a compromise that will receive broad bipartisan support today in the House.

When a child is identified as having a disability at an early age, their parents and teachers are better able to address their needs and ensure they are integrated into the regular educational setting and curriculum. I have worked hard to secure funding for newborn hearing screening programs, which save schools millions of dollars in special education costs by ensuring early detection and intervention of infants with hearing loss. Further efforts to increase early identification, as H.R. 1350 will accomplish, will save our schools millions more in special education costs.

I believe strongly that Congress must provide the funding promised nearly 30 years ago, and I have introduced legislation that would accomplish this goal. While this bill today does not require mandatory full funding, it is a step in the right direction in fulfilling the commitment we made our states and local school districts to provide 40 percent of the cost of IDEA. We owe it to our students, their families, and our communities, and I will continue to work with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make this promise a reality.

Because of the efforts of my colleagues, as well as families, teachers, and school administrators across the country, we are, today, able to put the needs of students and families first. I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of bipartisan legislation that will move us forward in our goal to provide an equal, quality education for all students.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. MARIE PRINGLE

HON. HENRY E. BROWN, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mrs. Marie Pringle who is retiring as a senior budget analyst for the General Administration and Coordination Service in the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Budget at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). She began her career with VA in July 1983. Mrs. Pringle has served her entire VA career in the Department's Office of Budget. During her tenure, VA's budget has grown from \$25 billion to \$73 billion with over 222,000 employees.

Mrs. Pringle's career spans more than 30 years of federal service. She began her federal service in 1972 at the Department of the Army, Office of the Assistant Secretary for In-

telligence, Directorate of Foreign Intelligence, Scientific and Technical Branch, as a clerk typist GS-4. Next she served with the Department of the Army's Office of the Surgeon General, U.S. Army Medical Department Personnel Support Agency. In 1978, she accepted a position in the Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, as a budget analyst. In 1981, she accepted a position at Steuart Petroleum Company in Washington, DC. After 2 years as a motor fuels inventory accountant, Mrs. Pringle returned to public service with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Mrs. Pringle has received numerous awards in recognition of her exceptional performance throughout her federal service career. She is a graduate of the Department's prestigious Leadership VA program, Class of 1992. She also was a member of the American Association of Budget and Program Analysts (AABPA).

Mrs. Pringle received a Bachelor of Science degree in Marketing from George Mason University. She is a native of Washington, DC, and currently resides in West River, Maryland, with her husband Darian. The Pringles have been sponsor parents for midshipmen of the United States Naval Academy and enjoy sailing and cruising on their trawler, the *Galileo*.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Budget Committee, as well as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Benefits of the Veterans' Affairs Committee, I can appreciate how challenging it can be to deal with the federal budget. When the committees review VA's five-volume budget submission each February, we see the industrious work of Mrs. Pringle and her associates on behalf of the Secretary. I commend Mrs. Pringle for her more than 30 years of dedicated public service to our nation and to those who have worn the military uniform.

CONGRESSIONAL TRIBUTE TO
JOHN T. LEWINSKI

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 7, 2004

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding local official in Michigan's First Congressional District. John T. Lewinski will be leaving the Gogebic County Board of Commissioners in January after 18 years of service. His years of work on behalf of his community represent the very best of Northern Michigan.

Mr. Lewinski's dedication to service should not surprise us though. As a member of the Greatest Generation, he joined the Navy during World War II, and served in the Pacific as a Navy Seabee in Guam. Like so many of his generation, John Lewinski returned home and worked to improve the country he risked his life to protect.

From 1966 to 1983, Mr. Lewinski was a forester's aide with the Gogebic County Forestry Department, working to preserve the Upper Peninsula's treasured forests. In January 1987, he joined the Gogebic County Board of Commissioners for the first time.

Since then, John Lewinski has served as chairman of the Gogebic County Board of Commissioners, chairman of the Airport Board, chairman of the Gogebic County Transit Board, chairman of the Community Mental