

followed by a Doctor of Jurisprudence in 1970 from St. Mary's University. In 1971, Judge Weiner began her legal career with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Judge Weiner continued to work for HUD for over 26 years and retired as Chief Counsel. While a Chief Counsel, Judge Weiner was responsible for all HUD program legal issues throughout a 57 county jurisdiction and was named the most outstanding HUD Chief Counsel in the country.

In January of 2001, Judge Weiner became a Justice of Peace for Precinct 2 of San Antonio, TX. As Justice of Peace, she has continued to improve the Precinct 2, which oversees evictions, small claims, juvenile disorderly conduct cases, misdemeanors and truancy. Judge Weiner strongly believes that juveniles can be redirected through early intervention with the right kind of counseling.

As an active volunteer and leader in the community, Judge Weiner continues to make significant contributions to the advancement of equal opportunity, the elevation of federal women's careers, and to the legal awareness of aging seniors and retired federal employees. Among her many honors and awards, Judge Weiner was recognized as "Texas Women to Watch" from 2002 to 2004 by the Business and Professional Women Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to recognize Judge Marcia Weiner for her dedication, commitment, and service to the betterment of society.

CONGRATULATING THE LADIES ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS, ST. JOHN NEUMANN DIVISION 1, ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS CHARTER

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 12, 2005*

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask you and my esteemed colleagues in the House of Representatives to pay tribute to the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, St. John Neumann Division 1, of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of their charter that occurred in January of 1980.

The primary purpose of the LAOH, which was first organized as the "Daughters of Erin" in 1894 in Omaha, Nebraska, was to protect young immigrant Irish girls coming to the United States. The LAOH offered support and encouragement and assisted the young women to secure employment. The LAOH also assisted the AOH in its efforts to aid the sick and needy and to defend priests, church and country.

In keeping with the original spirit of the LAOH, St. John Neumann Division 1 continues to assist young women of Irish descent by providing an annual scholarship to Bishop Hoban High School in Wilkes-Barre. They assist the sick and needy by adopting a family each year and contributing time and resources to the local soup kitchens and nursing homes. They also volunteer their time and resources to assist the American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, the American Diabetes Association and other worthy community programs.

The group continues to promote Catholic Irish heritage and culture through support of seminarians, their annual St. Brigid Mass, annual St. Patrick Mass, participation in Irish cultural history and dance programs, the Irish teachers program and parades in honor of St. Patrick.

St. John Neumann Division 1 produced two past LAOH state presidents, Claire McNeelis Karpowich and Kate Brennan Angerson, and is currently represented on the State board of directors by Maureen Lavelle, who serves as State historian.

Mary Ann Amesbury is the current president of St. John Neumann Division 1. Division officers include: Kellie Knesis, vice president; Maureen Lavelle, recording secretary; Suzanne Cosgrove, treasurer; Margaret Tudgay, financial secretary; Mary Ellen Dooley, historian; Ann Marie O'Hara, missions and charities; Eileen Potsko, Catholic action; Donna Mangan, sentinel and Mary Kathleen Williams, mistress at arms.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating the Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians, St. John Neumann Division 1, on this notable occasion. The Wilkes-Barre area community is fortunate to have the benefit of the selfless community service that members of the LAOH provide.

BANKRUPTCY REFORM

**HON. TOM DeLAY**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 12, 2005*

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, every year, loopholes in America's bankruptcy laws are abused, to the tune of tens of billions of dollars—costs that get passed on to consumers in higher prices and higher interest rates.

Our bankruptcy protections, which have always been available to debtors as a last resort, have become just another part of financial planning for too many Americans.

Over the last 15 years, bankruptcy filings have increased 150 percent.

In that time, our economy has grown, tens of millions of jobs have been created, and inflation has been held in check.

There are always families and businesses in need of bankruptcy protection, but not 1.7 million of them a year, Mr. Speaker.

Nor should drug traffickers and violent criminals be eligible for protection. Nor should debtors be able to use bankruptcy laws to avoid paying spousal and child support, which should—as this bill ensures—be the highest priority debts. Nor should small businesses, family farmers, and fishermen be thrown to the wolves every time their market takes a temporary downturn.

That is why the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005 has been a critical item on the Republican economic agenda for so long.

And that is why the House this week will finally pass a finished bill—already passed by the Senate—and send it on to the President for his signature.

These loopholes need closing, and at the same time, honest American debtors will always need protection.

That is why the bill we will take up—the product of years of development and negotia-

tion—will include debtor protections such as credit counseling, financial management courses, and greater clarity in credit card billing statements.

It isn't enough to punish the abusers and protect the victims; we must develop a credit system that helps consumers manage their debt before they get in too deep.

The bankruptcy bill is another example of the far-sighted and fair-minded reform agenda the House has been passing for a decade.

It has been a long time coming, Mr. Speaker, but this week we will get the job done.

GOVERNOR GRANHOLM, SBC COMMUNICATIONS, THE MICHIGAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION AND THE COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

**HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 12, 2005*

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend SBC Communications, Inc.; its Michigan president Gail Torreano; the Governor of my home State of Michigan, Jennifer Granholm; and representatives from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Communications Workers of America.

Earlier this month they came together to unveil a ten-year economic development project, which will keep 930 metropolitan jobs in Detroit and invest over \$3.6 million to upgrade seven network facilities in Southfield and Detroit. This incredible news comes only four months after SBC had initially announced plans to layoff workers.

Over the past five years, Michigan has lost nearly 300,000 jobs, and has had little prospect for significant job growth in sight. My State's unemployment rate was nearly two percent above the nation's average. That number increasingly looked gloomier with news last week that General Motors expects to lose money in this year's first quarter. As a result, their stock dropped 14 percent. My distinguished colleagues, there is no question about it—jobs in Michigan are in jeopardy.

But now, the future appears brighter with SBC Communications and others leading by example in recognizing that corporations play an integral role in their communities, and corporate decisions have consequences that reach much further than their own bottom line.

Such an agreement could not have been reached without strong leadership and a shared vision for the future from all parties involved. This agreement to keep SBC Communications' business in Michigan not only exhibits the great benefits that partnerships between the private and public sectors can reap for our nation's metropolitan communities, but more specifically, it demonstrates the success of Michigan's economic development programs and their capability of serving as a prime example for the rest of America's cities and states.

In agreeing not to move nearly 1,000 jobs out of Michigan, SBC Communications will receive a single business tax credit worth approximately \$18 million from the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, in addition to an Economic Development Job Training grant of up to \$930,000. The proposed