

While DR-CAFTA will bring tangible benefits to both the United States and the Central American region, there are chapters in the agreement that could have been improved as this process unfolded. I am disappointed that there was not more consultation with Congress as the administration negotiated the agreement. Members of both parties have concerns regarding DR-CAFTA's labor provisions. Although the agreement subjects failure to enforce labor laws to binding dispute settlement, which could lead to fines or sanctions, greater protections of workers' rights should have been made subject to binding dispute settlement.

In addition, while Congress will provide \$20 million in funding for capacity building efforts in the DR-CAFTA countries to help those nations implement and enforce the provisions of the agreement, \$20 million is not enough. More funding will be needed in future years to help the DR-CAFTA countries enforce the laws that protect workers, including children, from potentially dangerous work conditions.

I am also disappointed that the agreement does not confront the reality of globalization's negative consequences here at home. Trade agreements need to do more to help workers transition from jobs in distressed industries to new jobs in areas that stand to benefit from our modern economy. I would like to see greater efforts to retrain displaced workers. I look forward to working with the administration to help American workers remain competitive and employed well into the twenty-first century.

Mr. Speaker, globalization is a fact of life in our country and the rest of the world in 2005. It is part of a broad, long trend toward global economic integration. The United States should embrace its historic role as a global leader in international trade and seek to shape the path of a trend that will continue to unfold ready or not. The United States has the strongest economy and the best workforce in the world. We are well positioned to succeed throughout the twenty-first century. DR-CAFTA is not a perfect trade agreement. But it is a step in the right direction for the future of our country.

HONORING THE LIFE AND SACRIFICE OF ARMY SGT MICHAEL SCHAFFER OF SPRING HILL, FLORIDA

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the life and sacrifice of Army Staff Sergeant Michael Schaffer of Spring Hill, FL. Sgt. Schaffer was killed by enemy fire July 25, 2005 in Oruzgan, Afghanistan. He leaves behind his loving wife Danielle, parents Karen and Dan Barr, brother Tim, and grandparents Ron Forbes and Stan and Loretta Barr. In times when children and families need role models to look up to and emulate, Sgt. Schaffer was a true American hero.

A volunteer for the army in 1999, Sgt. Schaffer performed his basic training at Fort Benning, GA and Airborne training in Fort Bragg, NC. After he completed his training,

Sgt. Schaffer served in both the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, as well as Kosovo. A proud member of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, Sgt. Schaffer was one of the first paratroopers to jump into Kirkuk, Iraq during the March, 2003 invasion. Sgt. Schaffer served nine months in Iraq before being transferred to Afghanistan, and had expressed interest in going back to Iraq to be where the action was.

In addition to serving honorably in the United States Army, Sgt. Schaffer was a true and dedicated family man. Married to his wife Danielle within a week of shipping out to Kosovo, the couple was in constant contact throughout his tours of duty. At the time of his death, Sgt. Schaffer and his wife were looking to adopt a baby.

As a sign of the love for his family, Sgt. Schaffer wrote a poem to his mother before he left for basic training.

Mother, there comes a time in every boy's life when he leaves the warmth of the nest. Perhaps to look for all your qualities in his future wife; or join the working class like the rest. I am standing here before you this very day. To let you know when I leave not to fear, because I will never be that far away. And you will always be near and dear to my heart, it is where I will keep your love. I know that the bond that we have between us cannot be torn apart, and when I think of you so beautiful like a white dove, I want you to know that as I leave for the Army, if you are feeling scared, do not be afraid to show it. Your love for me won't let any one harm me. I will be back home before you know it.

Mr. Speaker, as a mother and a grandmother, I know the pain that comes when a child leaves home for the first time. What Sgt. Schaffer's family must cope with today, however, is the knowledge that their child will not be returning home. I can offer them this pledge, however; that this Congress will never forget the sacrifice Sgt. Schaffer made serving his country.

INTRODUCING A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF FEDERALLY QUALIFIED HEALTH CENTERS AND THE MEDICAID PROSPECTIVE PAYMENT SYSTEM FOR SUCH CENTERS

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce legislation today calling attention to the essential work of America's community health centers in providing quality affordable health care to people served by the Medicaid program and the nation's uninsured. I am pleased to be joined today by my colleague, the gentleman from New York, Mr. TOWNS, and a number of my House colleagues in supporting this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, community health centers will celebrate their 40th anniversary this year as will the Medicaid and Medicare programs. Among these programs, Medicaid and community health centers enjoy a special relationship, as twin pillars of a broad effort to improve health care for poor, minority, and un-

der-served Americans. The two programs in fact are specifically designed to work in tandem with one another to make access to quality health care a reality for the nation's most vulnerable populations.

Recognizing the importance of this unique relationship, the Congress in 1989 made health center services a guaranteed benefit under Medicaid. In 2000, I joined with a bipartisan majority of colleagues in the Congress to once again reaffirm the importance of this relationship by supporting legislation that created the health center Medicaid Prospective Payment System. As the Congress intended, this payment system has allowed health centers to provide and expand primary care and preventive services to more people in need, while promoting efficient operation of and ensuring adequate Medicaid reimbursement for these centers.

Today, because of Congress's wise actions, community health centers help to form the backbone of America's health care safety net, providing quality health care to 15 million underserved individuals nationwide, nearly 6 million of whom are enrolled in Medicaid.

In my own State of Mississippi, health centers are the family doctor and medical home for more than 300,000 individuals, more than a third of whom are covered by Medicaid.

However, health centers are doing more than just providing affordable quality health care to and improving the health status of the Nation's vulnerable populations, they are also delivering cost savings to taxpayers and to all payers of health center services. To be sure, health centers' costs rank among the lowest, and health centers are effectively reducing the need for more expensive hospital in-patient and specialty care. In addition, dozens of studies over the past three decades have found that health centers save the Medicaid program 30 percent or more in total annual spending per beneficiary, compared to other providers. Studies have also shown that the cost of treating Medicaid patients through health centers is 26 to 40 percent lower for prescription drugs costs.

Mr. Speaker, I believe health centers are a top priority of President Bush and this Congress because they undoubtedly are providing cost-effective, high-quality health care to the Nation's poor and medically underserved and because they are a vital safety net in the Nation's health delivery system. I urge my colleagues to show their support for America's community health centers by supporting this important legislation.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC-CENTRAL AMERICAN-UNITED STATES FREE TRADE AGREEMENT IMPLEMENTATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 27, 2005

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Central American Free Trade Agreement and encourage my colleagues to join me in opposing its ratification. Trade agreements of this magnitude must not be entered into lightly, and their impact must be investigated thoroughly.