

and the work of our Nation's eye banks will prove even more important. I know they are up to this new challenge and Congress must stand behind them.

The first successful transplant of cornea tissue was made more than one hundred years ago. Since then, advancements in medical technology have been phenomenal. Cornea transplants are now among the most common and most successful transplant procedures. More than one million people, ranging in age from nine days to 107 years old, have received eye tissue transplants.

All eye banks are not-for-profit organizations that are community-based and work with local philanthropic organizations, such as Lions Clubs, to educate citizens on the importance of donation. The community-based reach helps contribute to their success. Eye banks facilitate approximately 46,000 sight-restoring transplants each year. In my home state of Georgia, over 1,000 Georgians have been given the gift of sight with the help of the Georgia Eye bank and our ocular transplant physicians. Their success is a testament to their hard work but it also indicates that Congress must join eye banks in the struggle they face everyday.

The Eye Bank Association of America has been vital in advancing the cause of eye donation for the past 45 years. Their efforts to raise awareness and support for eye donation have done wonders for the development of safe and effective transplants. This year marks the 23rd anniversary of Eye Donor Month.

If you are not yet an anatomical gift donor, I encourage you to become one. I know all too well what may seem like a simple check on a card can mean to those awaiting a life-saving or life-enhancing donation. I continue my call and challenge to all Americans to discuss this issue with their families and consider becoming an organ, eye, and tissue donor. Such conversations must take place around the kitchen table, not after a loved one is gone. The process of becoming a donor takes just a few minutes, but its impact can last a lifetime for recipients. I also hope that people consider the merits of donating not just solid organs, but tissue and corneas as well. As our eye banks have proven, being able to give the gift of sight is truly a testament to our medical advancement.

As this month goes on, I encourage my colleagues to recognize the success of eye banks across our Nation and work to increase local awareness about corneal transplants and the importance of donation. Transplants that give the gift of sight change Americans' lives every day, and we must do everything in our power to support this effort. I, for one, will do my part and hope you will join me in saluting our Nation's eye banks during Eye Donor Month.

EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR FULL FISCAL YEAR 2007 FUNDING OF THE NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAM/RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING WORK OF THE MOREHOUSE COLLEGE NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS PROGRAM

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise in vehement opposition to the proposed elimination of National Youth Sports Program (NYSP) funding, contained in the President's Budget Request, for the second year in a row. I am concerned that some of my colleagues may not understand the severity of the situation that NYSP is facing. If Congress does not provide full FY07 funding for NYSP, the program will be forced to close its doors. This will result in 75,000 of our nation's most vulnerable youth, being left behind next summer.

NYSP uses sports instruction and competition, as a vehicle to enhance self-esteem and respect, among boys and girls from low-income households. Established in 1969, with a \$3 million funding commitment from the White House, NYSP has provided over 2 million participants with instruction in career and educational opportunities, and exposure to the college environment for nearly four decades.

Because I have witnessed, firsthand, the difference that the NYSP program has made in the lives of under served youth in my Congressional District I cannot, in good conscience, sit idly by as this essential program is dismantled. In my Congressional District, Morehouse College has done an outstanding job of running the NYSP program for nearly four decades, serving over 10,000 children throughout Atlanta. The Morehouse College NYSP program is unique, because it has taken great pains to maintain a balance between athletics and academics. Similar to NYSP programs throughout the nation, Morehouse College offers instruction focusing on sports. However, it also includes additional instruction in areas such as: nutrition, drug awareness and prevention, creative writing, and leadership development.

The NYSP program has a tremendous impact on the youth that it serves in my Congressional District. By placing NYSP participants in academic settings, where they receive hundreds of hours of exposure to the benefits of higher education, the participants begin to believe that they, too, can succeed in college and beyond. Furthermore, the mentoring relationships established between the teaching/coaching staff, college student volunteers, and NYSP participants, have resulted in hundreds of former NYSP participants returning to work in the program at Morehouse College as student volunteers.

Mr. Speaker, NYSP is not asking for a handout from Congress. In fact, in 2005 NYSP secured two-thirds of its operating expenses from other public and private sources, such as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the 202 selected institutions of higher education with which it partners. The Administration knows that NYSP works. Congress knows that NYSP works. Institutions of higher learning in 47 states and the District of Columbia know that NYSP works. Most impor-

tant, over 2 million NYSP participants, and their families, know that it works.

I strongly encourage all of my colleagues, especially those serving on the budget and appropriations committees, to reject the President's proposed elimination of the NYSP program, and provide full funding for FY07.

TRIBUTE TO MARCIA S. SMITH

HON. SHERWOOD BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to draw our colleagues' attention to the pending retirement of Marcia S. Smith from the Congressional Research Service after over thirty years of service to Congress. Marcia is one of the preeminent and most highly respected policy analysts in her field, and while she will remain an active figure in space and telecommunications policy at the National Academy of Sciences, her intelligence, expertise, objectivity and balance will be greatly missed on both sides of Capitol Hill.

Marcia Smith began her career at the Congressional Research Service in 1975, after graduating from Syracuse University with a degree in political science. She quickly became an accomplished and adept analyst in space and aerospace policy, rising to Specialist in Aerospace and Telecommunications Policy, first in the Science Policy Research Division, and then in the Resources, Science and Industry Division, of CRS. In her service to Congress, she has provided background and analytic reports, memoranda, committee prints and expert testimony to Members of Congress and committees of the U.S. Congress on matters concerning U.S. and foreign military and civilian space activities, and on telecommunications issues (and formerly on nuclear energy).

Marcia has been a mentor and advisor to over a dozen CRS analysts and researchers during her time in that organization. She was Section Head for Space and Defense Technologies from 1987-1991, and Section Head for Energy, Aerospace and Transportation Technologies from 1984-1985.

To give my colleagues an idea of how prolific and proficient Marcia Smith has been during service to Congress, she has authored or coauthored over 160 reports and articles on space, nuclear energy, and telecommunications policies and issues. She has testified as an expert witness before House and Senate Committees nearly 20 times, a significant number of those times in front of the committee I chair, the Committee on Science.

I would like to point out 2 instances in which Marcia has served both Congress and her country in an exemplary manner. In both instances, these were circumstances marked by tragedy—when the Space Shuttle *Challenger* was lost at launch on January 28, 1986, and again when the Space Shuttle *Columbia* was lost during re-entry on February 1, 2003. Within hours of the *Challenger* disaster, Marcia was briefing congressional staff and talking to Members of Congress about the technical, policy, and human costs of this accident. She was widely interviewed and quoted by the national and international news media. And in the painful months following the accident,