

tighter restrictions than the product in which they are included. This bill stipulates that no part will face tighter restrictions than the device for which it is manufactured.

Mr. Speaker, our export control system needs direction and vision. It is my hope that the legislation I have introduced today will go a long way toward reforming this system, and end the current practice of tying the hands of America's best competitors.

FAIRNESS FOR THE WIDOWS OF
OUR MILITARY RETIREES

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Military Survivors Equity Act of 1995.

I would like to tell you a story, a story with an unhappy ending. A resident of my congressional district, when he retired from his service in the Armed Forces of our country, decided to have a portion of his monthly retired pay withheld in order to pay for benefits for his wife in case he died.

Unfortunately, he died an untimely death, and his wife began to receive a monthly death benefit. The amount she received was 55 percent of her husband's retired pay.

Imagine her astonishment when she turned 62 and found that the amount of her benefit was reduced to 35 percent of her husband's retired pay. When she inquired as to the reason, she was told that because she was eligible to get Social Security, her survivor benefits were reduced.

"But my Social Security payment is based on my own work," she said. "Why is the pension that my husband paid for in any way connected to my Social Security?" The answer: because that's the law!

Well, I think it's time to change this law—a law which simply doesn't make sense. The Military Survivor Benefit Plan, called the SBP plan, is a good idea—but it is very complicated.

For some, SBP benefits are reduced or offset by the amount of the military retiree's Social Security when the survivor reaches age 62—regardless of when she actually begins to draw Social Security benefits.

For others, under the newer two-tier SBP plan, like the widow in my congressional district, the benefit is automatically reduced at age 62 to 35 percent of her husband's retired military pay—a reduction of over 1/3 from her previous benefits.

I believe it is time to get rid of these offsets. It is time to live up to the expectations of our military retirees, when they choose to provide for their widows after their deaths. It is time to simplify this incredibly complicated SBP system.

My bill will provide an SBP death benefit equal to 55 percent of the military retiree pay. Period. No offsets. No reductions. That is what our military retirees expected. That is what their widows expected. That is what we should deliver.

It is time to live up to our commitment to those who have served our Nation so honorably. It is time to correct the wrongs inflicted on their widows. It is time to restore honor to the Military Survivor Benefit Plan.

TRADE REORGANIZATION ACT OF
1995

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, on July 27, 1995 I was joined by seven of my colleagues in introducing the Trade Reorganization Act of 1995, HR. 2124. The purpose of this bill is to consolidate the functions of the U.S. Trade Representative's Office with the trade functions of the Commerce Department into one U.S. Trade Office. The cosponsors of the bill realize that all of these trade functions are critical to enhancing U.S. exports and creating jobs. A legislative drafting error resulted in the appearance that our bill only transferred the foreign component of the United States and Foreign Commercial Service. I want the record to reflect that it was the intent of all the sponsors of the bill to preserve the domestic offices and include those operations in the U.S. Trade Office.

ELIZABETH ADKINS AMONG VFW
VOICE OF DEMOCRACY NA-
TIONAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

HON. HENRY J. HYDE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 4, 1995

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a remarkable member of my district, Elizabeth Adkins, the Illinois winner of the 1995 Voice of Democracy scriptwriting contest. Each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its Ladies Auxiliary sponsors the competition, choosing winners from over 126,000 scripts submitted by high school students around the nation. Elizabeth, a recent graduate of Wheaton North High School, received top honors in Illinois for her speech entitled "My Vision for America". I am proud to recognize this bright young author as well as the thousands of patriotic students who participated in the contest.

"MY VISION FOR AMERICA"

America has, since its conception, been the embodiment of democratic and moralistic ideals. As a nation we defend again and again the principles that we are built upon. Freedom, equality, justice, and opportunity. We struggle together over where the line is crossed between national morals and narrow-minded policies, between equality and reverse-discrimination, between personal choice and the rights of an unborn child. But only in America could these struggles strengthen a country. Only in America could citizens dare to disagree with their government. Only in America could political leaders and parties change every four or eight years and not cause a complete collapse of the nation. And so, in asking what my vision for America is, I cannot say a New America or a different America. For I do not want to abandon the America of today or forget the America of yesterday.

I do believe, however, that this nation can and will be improved. I see a need in America. And I believe that this need has been growing for the last thirty years. Each American citizen must begin to take some responsibility. Responsibility for his or her own actions, mistakes, and well-being. Re-

sponsibility for those less fortunate who do not have the ability to care for themselves. And responsibility for what this nation does. A devoted citizen would not disown their country every time it made a mistake, or didn't have enough money, or lost one battle or another. As devoted citizens, we Americans must stand behind this country, improving it when we can and fighting for it when we must.

The major problems of the United States would be alleviated if citizens took initiative and were willing to bear the burdens that citizens of a powerful democratic nation must bear. In the America of tomorrow, each citizen will have rediscovered their moral basis and built a motivational basis. A strong moral basis will help to alleviate the crime problem. Children who are taught simply what is right and wrong and who are challenged and encouraged to do what is right will be more equipped to lead lives void of crime. Perhaps what this country needs are a few reminders from the America of yesterday. Maybe we need to hear a few more stories where good battles evil and the good guy wins. In the America of tomorrow there is only one winner in the fight between right and wrong. Americans must begin to develop moral responsibility.

And it isn't just about doing what is right anymore. America needs to advance beyond doing what is right to doing what is best. Is it enough to simply take care of your family? What about helping your neighbors or your community? American citizens need to be responsible for fellow American citizens. My vision for America returns to neighborhood groups and local organizations that are trying to make some improvements. When citizens begin to take actions to assist their neighbors as well as themselves, vivid changes will take place. When citizens learn to give of themselves for someone else, materialism and special interests will vanish. When Americans develop a responsibility for their neighbors and their communities, they will be able to look forward as a unified nation to improving this country as a whole.

My vision of America is that each man and woman will understand the need to pull together as a nation and to pull oneself together as an individual citizen. In this America, the word duty will have the resonance that it once did. Each American has a duty, and that duty is what makes a democracy work. In order for America to maintain those freedoms and liberties which we all cherish, we must fulfill our duties and responsibilities to ourselves, our neighbors, and our nation.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
1996

SPEECH OF

HON. FRED HEINEMAN

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 11, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1868) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. HEINEMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have listened to the debate and studied the details in this bill. The Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill reduces spending by \$9 billion from last year and reduces or eliminates many effective, wasteful or duplicative programs. This