

have hosted over 800 screenings, providing students with an opportunity to view the abundance of high-quality, educational programming exclusive to cable TV and to engage in interactive group discussions on the various issues addressed by the programming.

#### DISTANCE LEARNING

Cable's state-of-the-art technology has also provided additional learning opportunities for at-home students, with cable systems across the country delivering instruction and learning opportunities directly to the home from leading universities and other continuing education providers. Distance learning, too, has grown with cable's advanced technology, now featuring virtual "electronic field trips," with students interacting via satellite and over the Internet in real-time to visit and learn with experts in the field from the Berlin Wall, to the rain forests of Costa Rica, the plains of Kenya, and many more.

#### TRIBUTE TO OFFICER TODD SHELTON

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 24, 1996*

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the actions of a brave police Officer. Recently, Officer Todd Shelton's quick thinking and cool judgement are responsible for saving the life of a potential drowning victim.

On June 23, 1996 in the Village of Put-In-Bay, OH, Officer Shelton observed a man stumbling on a municipal dock off Lake Erie. The man fell in the water and became trapped beneath a boat. Quickly running to the scene, Officer Shelton located the victim and jumped in after him. By going beneath the water, the officer was able to grab the victim's shirt, free him, and bring him to the surface for air. After making sure he was breathing, Officer Shelton pulled him from the water and summoned medics to treat numerous cuts and abrasions on the victim. Had Officer Shelton not responded in the manner he did, the victim would have assuredly drowned.

Mr. Speaker, Officer Shelton's actions represent the courageous decisions made every day by police officers all across Ohio and America. These dedicated personnel continue to exemplify the good characteristics in society and are tremendous role models for our children. By risking his own life, Officer Shelton was able to save another. Too often, we forget the awesome responsibilities we ask our safety personnel, whether it is firemen, police, or Coast Guard, to undertake. Safe and responsible behavior is not just important in protecting ourselves but also those whose profession is to serve and protect.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Officer Todd Shelton on his good work and encourage him to continue to serve his community with such dedication.

MURRAY AND BEATRICE SAFRAN  
HONORED

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 24, 1996*

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, Murray and Beatrice Safran are a living affirmation of the institution of marriage. It was 50 years ago, on February 17, 1946, that they were married. They had five children and have contributed to their community and their country with pride and distinction.

Murray served in the U.S. Army from 1942–46 after which he was a guidance counselor and social studies teacher and United Federation of Teachers chapter chairman. He was also active in the Jewish War Veterans. In 1994, he was named Man of the Year by the Association of Americans and Canadians in Israel. Beatrice served as cochairperson of the Association for Help of Retarded Children, as secretary to the president of Hebrew University and involved herself in politics as a member of the Reform Democratic Club.

I want to congratulate Murray and Beatrice on their 50 years of marriage and their children, Judith, Hal, Aron, Sari, and Debra.

#### CASEWORK

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, July 24, 1996*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, July 24, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

#### HELPING HOOSIERS WITH CASEWORK

A large part of my work involves helping Hoosiers who are caught up in federal red tape or who feel lost in trying to deal with the government bureaucracy. Although not the kind of thing that gets a lot of public attention, working daily to help individual Hoosiers is one of my most important roles as a Member of Congress.

#### BACKGROUND

Individuals contact my office looking for a wide range of assistance. Sometimes it is an older person whose Medicare claim was incorrectly denied, a farmer who needs help with a government loan, a family that has not received its tax refund, or someone travelling abroad who needs an emergency passport. Other times it could be someone with a specific question, but just doesn't know where to go or whom to contact.

The variety of individual casework can be enormous. In recent weeks I have worked on everything from getting stalled benefit checks started for recent retirees to helping needy people get into affordable housing to getting assistance for dislocated defense workers. My most frequent contacts are to Medicare, Social Security, Veterans Affairs, the military, and the IRS. Sometimes I contact state agencies, for example, when helping a local family receive child support from a father who has left the state.

Many of my efforts also involve helping local businesses. I recently assisted a local doctor who couldn't get payment from Medicare for services he provided in 1992, a medical center whose reimbursement for care was being held up because the federal agency was

misreading the regulations, and businesses prevented by bureaucratic roadblocks from getting start-up funds and needed permits to be able to sell their products. At times I may even need to contact foreign governments, recently helping a local company receive payments for business it did with India.

My office also assist 9th District communities in a variety of ways—from getting assistance for communities damaged by natural disasters to cutting through red tape in redevelopment of closed military bases, such as Jefferson Proving Ground. Often communities have applied for federal grants, which my office can help move along. For example, I helped a local community get a small business revolving loan fund that a federal agency incorrectly thought should be taken away, and recently stepped in when a government agency simply lost a local application for community development assistance. Since the beginning of last year I have supported more than 100 projects bringing in over \$62 million to the District. My office frequently checks with local government officials, asking if they are experiencing difficulties with Washington.

#### THE PROCESS

Requests for casework come by letter, phone, and personal contracts. After someone signs a consent form allowing me to review their file and contact a federal agency on their behalf, my office will then contact the relevant agency to ask that the constituent's problems be given full, prompt, and fair considerations. After the agency has acted on the request, the constituent is informed about the outcome. Most of the casework my office handles is resolved favorably, but if a particular case is not, the constituent is usually given information about appeal rights or any alternative opportunities for assistance.

Each week my office receives some 80 new requests for help. Some may be resolved quickly, while others involving benefit claims can take longer. At any one time my office may have up to 400 cases pending with federal agencies and departments.

#### LIMITATIONS

Various limitations are placed on what Members of Congress can do on behalf of constituents. Federal law prohibits Members from accepting compensation for government services, and there are restrictions on contacts in formal agency proceedings that resemble court proceedings. But Members can contact agencies and departments about normal regulatory proceedings, such as when a department issues regulations on a new law. On typical contacts by Members on behalf of their constituents, federal law and the courts have generally granted Members broad leeway, based in large part on the view that allowing Congress to communicate as freely as possible is essential to oversight of the unelected bureaucracy.

Congressional ethics guidelines recommend that Members not exert "undue influence" upon an agency through threats or promises of rewards. But arguing a matter on the merits, expressing an opinion on an agency matter, or asking for reconsideration of a past decision all have been considered permissible conduct by Members.

My view is that Members should not be trying to secure benefits for their constituents that they don't deserve. The main emphasis should be on providing information and facilitating communication between constituents and the bureaucracy. Constituents should receive exactly what they deserve under law—no more and no less.

#### IMPORTANCE

Casework is important, first, because people need help dealing with the large government bureaucracy. The ways the government

affects citizens—both favorably and unfavorably—are numerous. Many of the cases brought to my attention are severe. Casework is crucial because it addresses the real needs of people.

Second, members of the bureaucracy can make mistakes. A few years ago, for example, I helped an older man who needed kidney dialysis, but whose Medicare coverage was being cut off because the Social Security Administration thought he was dead. Casework helps reduce the frustration people feel toward what appears to be a massive, impersonal government.

Third, constituent service often alerts Congress to limitations in a law. For instance, farmer contacts about crop insurance regulations led to my pushing a measure which changed the law to allow individual waivers. Many programs, ranging from veterans benefits to regulatory policy, have been amended by Congress because of problems first brought to our attention by constituents asking for help.

#### CONCLUSION

Constituent service can be tough work for Members of Congress, and an unrelenting demand on our time. But in many ways casework is one of the most rewarding parts of the job. Passing legislation often requires difficult compromise and can take years. With casework, Members can see the impact of their work on the daily lives of individual citizens. Nothing gives more satisfaction than to see that my efforts made a difference and improved the quality of life for a constituent.

#### TRIBUTE TO A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

HON. RICHARD J. DURBIN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program's legacy of excellence. For over 80 years, this program, from the 20th congressional district, has been a dominant force within the great tradition of Illinois high school basketball. The hard work, determination, and commitment to excellence of past and present players and coaches has led to the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program being named the United States all-time winningest boys basketball program.

The National Federation of High School Associations recognized this national title in its National High School Sports Record Book. According to the 1996 edition, the Centralia Orphans amassed a record of 1,760 wins to 755 losses from 1908 to 1995. This athletic achievement is testament to the program's dedication to excellence that has made the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program an outstanding success.

I ask my colleagues to join me in a salute to all of the Orphan players, coaches, supporters, and parents who worked to achieve this extraordinary accomplishment.

#### TRIBUTE TO SELMA JEAN COHEN

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Selma Jean Cohen, a

Baltimorean who recently died after dedicating much of her life to helping others.

Mrs. Cohen, who died July 2 at the age of 75, was born in an era that did not encourage women to develop all their talents. But that did not stop her from marching to her own drummer and taking on new challenges. As a mother, wife, volunteer and professional woman, she found innumerable ways throughout her life to make a difference in her community and in the lives of hundreds of families she befriended in times of need.

In her early years of raising her two sons, Ellis and Jerome, Mrs. Cohen was a PTA president, a Cub Scout den mother and the president of the sisterhood at her synagogue. After her sons were grown, Mrs. Cohen began a career at the State department of health and mental hygiene where she became the director of nursing home bed registry, a position she held for 25 of her 34 years with the department.

But her work with the State was just part of her dedication to helping others. Mrs. Cohen and her husband, Leonard, whom she met at a Benny Goodman dance in 1940, have been weekend volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House in Baltimore for the past 10 years. In their work at the Ronald McDonald House, they comforted out-of-town families with very sick children at Baltimore area hospitals and made these families feel at home. She and Leonard also found time to do hospice work at Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital and help sick children at the Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital.

I urge my colleagues to join me in extending our condolences to the family of Selma Jean Cohen. Her cheer and energy will be missed by all who knew her and by all of us who believe that one person can make a difference.

#### THANK YOU, RISDEN WALL, FOR YOUR LOYAL SERVICE

HON. JACK FIELDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was with mixed emotions that I announced last December 11 my decision to retire from the House at the conclusion of my current term. As I explained at the time, the decision to retire was made more difficult because of the loyalty and dedication of my staff—and because of the genuine friendship I feel for each of them. They have served the men and women of Texas' 8th Congressional District in an extraordinary way.

Today, I want to thank one member of my staff—Risden Wall, a legislative assistant who is serving a congressional fellowship through the Brookings Institution. Risden is a senior special agent with the U.S. Customs Service who began his congressional fellowship in my office in January 1995.

Risden, a native of Ridgeland, SC, earned an associate degree from Brewton Parker Junior College in 1966, and received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University in 1970. From 1967 to 1969, he served in the U.S. Army as an airborne combat infantryman with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC, and as a rifleman/radio transmitting operator with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Republic of Vietnam.

After leaving the Army and obtaining his college degree, Risden went to work for the U.S. Customs Service in Miami, where he served as a "sky marshal," charged with deterring possible skyjacketings of domestic and international commercial flights. Soon thereafter, Risden served as a special agent in the Customs Service's Miami office—working to prevent narcotics smuggling, money laundering, fraud and other criminal activities. He served in that position for 12 years before moving to Washington to become a senior special agent at Customs Service headquarters, where he worked on financial investigations and undercover operations.

In 1986, Risden was asked to represent the Customs Service on the National Drug Enforcement Policy Board. On the board, he helped establish strategic priorities for all federal anti-narcotics activities. From 1986 to 1991, he served as the Customs Service's representative to the U.S. National Central Bureau of INTERPOL, coordinating investigative activities between 160 member countries, 20,000 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, the Justice Department and other authorities within the executive branch.

Prior to his fellowship, Risden served as the Customs Service's Northeast Area program manager. As such, he was responsible for overseeing all Customs Service investigations in the northeastern United States.

As a member of my staff, Risden has worked on banking, housing, veterans affairs, international relations, military affairs and judiciary issues—keeping me abreast of legislative developments in each of these areas and responding to constituent inquiries.

Risden is one of those hard-working men and women who make all of us in this institution look better than we deserve. I know he has done that for me, and I appreciate this opportunity to publicly thank him for the dedication, loyalty and professionalism he has exhibited throughout his tenure in my office.

Risden's future plans after I retire are as yet uncertain, but knowing him as well as I do, I am confident that the skills and professionalism he has demonstrated in my office will lead to continued success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I know you join with me in saying "Thank you" to Risden Wall for his loyal service to me, to the men and women of Texas' 8th Congressional District, and to this great institution. And I know you join with me in wishing him and his lovely wife, Georgene, the very best in the future.

#### AWARDS PRESENTED TO OUTSTANDING HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS

HON. STEVEN SCHIFF

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the following graduating high school students from the First Congressional District of New Mexico who have been awarded the Congressional Certificate of Merit:

#### CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AWARD WINNERS 1996

Albuquerque Evening High School, Vera Lujan; Albuquerque High School, Monica Becerra; Bernalillo High School, Lance Darnell; Cibola High School, Jessica Shaw;