Mr. Speaker, I believe this bill will serve to help our law enforcement agencies, and I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation.

A TRIBUTE TO DEPUTY JAMES W. LEHMAN, JR. AND DEPUTY MICHAEL P. HAUGEN

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. SONNY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, we would like to bring to your attention the memory of two Riverside County sheriff's deputies who became victims of a senseless and tragic act of violence on January 5, 1997. Early Sunday morning, Deputy James W. Lehmann, Jr. and Deputy Michael P. Haugen, two of our finest law enforcement officials, gave their lives in the line of duty.

The deputies, these husbands, these fathers went out everyday to make a difference and they did—some days in small ways, some days in big ways, and, on this date, at the cost of their lives. One cannot ask more of peace officers. Deputies Lehmann and Haugen deserve our deepest respect and gratitude.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and our colleagues join us today in remembering these fine men. Our prayers and most heartfelt sympathy are extended to their families and loved ones. To Deputy Lehmann's wife, Valerie, son, Christopher and daughter, Ashley; and Deputy Haugen's wife, Elizabeth, son, Stephen, and daughter, Catherine—we honor the memory of your loved ones and wish them God's peace.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEPOSITORY INSTITUTION AFFILIATION AND THRIFT CHARTER CONVERSION ACT (H.R. 268)

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join Chairwoman ROUKEMA in sponsoring the reintroduction of the Depository Institution Affiliation and Thrift Charter Conversion Act. This bill is a marker of our intent to move forward this year in a bipartisan manner on legislation that we are hopeful will translate into meaningful financial services modernization. It is a product of compromise between the most significant groups in the financial services industry who refer to themselves as the ''Alliance''.

Many members of the Banking Committee and other committees in the House have labored the past Congress to advance the cause of modernization. It has been a difficult road and efforts in the last Congress did not resolve the issue.

Our current U.S. financial laws and policy are lagging actual marketplace conditions, a circumstance that has been apparent for at least the past 6 years. The U.S. mixed economy can best be served by a modernized legal framework, serving the dynamic U.S. financial system shaped by the marketplace and facilitated by congressional debate and law, rather than by incremental uncertain regulatory change. We advance this proposed measure as a continuation of, and building upon successful efforts to modernize that began with the passage of interstate banking in 1994.

While each provision of this bill may not be supported by every organization of the Alliance, nor members within the organizations, this comprehensive effort certainly demonstrates that groups can come to the table and work constructively together for modernization. I'm hopeful that we can build upon this strong base a still broader coalition and act to modernize our laws in this complex financial marketplace.

In the last Congress, Chairman ROUKEMA and I worked together on charter conversion as part of the BIF–SAIF bill (H.R. 2363) that finally evolved into the House position last year and became the basis for provisions enacted into law. Importantly, the comprehensive Depository Institution Affiliation and Thrift Charter Conversion Act we now introduce includes thrift charter conversion and the many attendant issues of thrift conversion. This bill is a comprehensive approach that establishes a policy of functional regulation involving all the regulators, Glass Steagall reform, and the affiliations issues. I am confident we will continue to work together to make improvements in the legislation so that it will not only modernize financial systems, but will also protect the safety and soundness of the deposit insurance funds and better serve and preserve our economic role in the world.

Changes have been made to the bill since it was introduced last fall. Several amendments were suggested by the American Council of Life Insurance. Others were incorporated at the suggestion of the thrift industry which continues to prefer an even broader approach to affiliations. As we move forward with the necessary subcommittee hearings and proceed to a markup, we will continue to modify the legislation. Even as we have introduced this legislation this week, I have reservations about several aspects of the bill including the regulatory framework for financial services holding companies. This more SEC-like structure will certainly require further scrutiny as we evaluate its appropriateness and its fit with the structure of insured depository institutions.

As this broad legislation moves forward, I am able to envision a number of improvements as questions are resolved. We will be looking to ensure that any measure we bring to the full House will provide assurance that tough firewalls are intact and that the measure will not expose the taxpayers to new costs from activities with more risk potential. Congress must also ensure that a proper focus is kept clear for service and responsibilities to local communities and consumers. As the U.S. strives to be more competitive internationally, financial institutions must remain active and viable in our localities even as the law provides and prepares U.S. financial institutions for competition in the global marketplace.

This bill's overall approach reflects a compromise between a substantial portion of the players active in providing financial services—key banking, thrift, and securities participants with input from some in the insurance industry. This bill represents positions that they, too, have tried to bring into harmony for the purpose of shaping a policy for the future. It is a sound framework, a base, not necessarily the final product or policy. By placing this bill on the agenda, it is my hope to advance this debate and dynamic to a successful change in policy in the near future which will serve American enterprises and consumers in our mixed economy today and tomorrow.

TRIBUTE TO THE GREENPOINT GAZETTE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in tribute to the Greenpoint Gazette, a local newspaper which celebrates its 25th anniversary on Saturday, January 11, 1997. This newspaper has made a major contribution to the Williamsburg-Greenpoint community of Brooklyn, NY, and deserves honor for its many years of dedicated service.

The Greenpoint Gazette started publication in 1971. At that time, local residents had experienced frustration with the existing newspaper for its uneven reporting on local candidates. A few of these residents, Ralph Carrano and Adelle Haines, among them, launched the Greenpoint Gazette. It began out of Adelle Haines' house. Revenue for the paper came from advertisements, paid notices, and the newsstand price of 10 cents a copy.

The Greenpoint Gazette has always been responsive to and involved in the community it serves. Residents of Greenpoint use the paper to celebrate birthdays, births, and anniversaries; to announce weddings, engagements, graduations, job promotions, and deaths; and to voice opinions about issues of the day. Each year, the Gazette sponsors the Miss Polonia event, a beauty contest to select the young woman who will be chosen to represent the community in Manhattan's Pulaski Day Parade. The Gazette regularly publishes press releases submitted by elected officials to keep voters informed of Federal, State, and local issues. Finally, in keeping with its 25-year tradition as the voice of all of Greenpoint, the paper welcomes submissions with opinions that differ from those of the editors.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to pay tribute to the Greenpoint Gazette, a paper which takes pride in its service to the Williamsburg-Greenpoint community. I ask that my colleagues join with me in honoring the Gazette for 25 years of dedicated and reliable service.

INTRODUCTION OF A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT TO ABOLISH THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE

HON. RAY LaHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, Today, I am proud to introduce, along with Congressman WISE from West Virginia, a constitutional amendment that seeks to end the arcane and

obsolete institution known as the electoral college.

It is no accident that this bill is being introduced today, the day that the electoral ballots are opened and counted in the presence of the House and Senate. I hope that the timing of this bill's introduction will only underscore the fact that the time has come to put an end to this archaic practice that we must endure every 4 years.

Only the President and the Vice President of the United States are currently elected indirectly by the electoral college—and not by the voting citizens of this country. All other elected officials, from the local officeholder up to U.S. Senator, are elected directly by the people.

Our bill will replace the complicated electoral college system with the simple method of using the popular vote to decide the winner of a Presidential election. By switching to a direct voting system, we can avoid the result of electing a President who failed to win the popular vote. This out come has, in fact, occurred three times in our history and resulted in the elections of John Quincy Adams, 1824, Rutherford B. Hayes, 1876, and Benjamin Harrison, 1888.

In addition to the problem of electing a President who failed to receive the popular vote, the electoral college system also allows for the peculiar possibility of having Congress decide the outcome should a Presidential ticket fail to receive a majority of the electoral college votes. Should this happen, the 12th amendment requires the House of Representatives to elect a President and the Senate to elect a Vice President. Such an occurrence would clearly not be in the best interest of the people, for they would be denied the ability to directly elect those who serve in our highest offices.

This bill will put to rest the electoral college and its potential for creating contrary and singular election results. And, it is introduced not without historical precedent. In 1969, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed a bill calling for the abolition of the electoral college and putting a system of direct election in its place. Despite passing the House by a vote of 338 to 70, the bill got bogged down in the Senate where a filibuster blocked its progress.

So, it is in the spirit of this previous action that we introduce legislation to end the electoral college. I am hopeful that our fellow members on both sides of the aisle will stand with us by cosponsoring this important piece of legislation.

THE FREEDOM OF CHOICE FOR WOMEN IN THE UNIFORMED SERVICES ACT

HON. JANE HARMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Ms. HARMAN. Mr. Speaker, among the more extreme laws put in place by the last Congress is the policy banning privately funded abortions performed at overseas military hospitals. This policy means that women serving overseas in our Nation's Armed Forces cannot exercise the same constitutional rights afforded women living in the continental United States. These servicewomen and their dependents could be forced to seek illegal and unsafe procedures or could be forced to delay the procedure until they can return to the United States.

This is an issue of fundamental fairness. Servicewomen and military dependents stationed abroad do not expect special treatment, only the right to receive the same constitutionally protected medical services that women in the United States receive.

That's why today, as the senior Democratic woman on the House National Security Committee, I am introducing the ''Freedom of Choice for Women in the Uniformed Services Act.'' This bill simply repeals the statutory prohibition on abortions in overseas military hospitals and restores the law to what it was during most of the Reagan administration. If enacted, women would be permitted to use their own funds to obtain abortion services. No Federal funds would be used and health care professionals who are opposed to performing abortions as a matter of conscience or moral principle would not be required to do so.

I would like to thank my colleagues CONNIE MORELLA, ROSA DELAURO, SUE KELLY, RON DELLUMS, JOHN BALDACCI, EVA CLAYTON, JOHN CONYERS, SAM FARR, BARNEY FRANK, MARTIN FROST, LYNN RIVERS, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, and LOUISE SLAUGHTER for joining me as original cosponsors.

I urge the House to take up and pass this important legislation restoring the right of freedom of choice to women serving overseas in our Nation's Armed Forces.

THE PURSUIT OF PROFIT: NONPROFIT HOSPITALS BECOME THE BIG PUBLIC GIVEAWAY OF THE NINETIES

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today along with Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. FILNER, Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio, I am pleased to introduce the Medicare Non-profit Hospital Protection Act of 1997 in response to the fast-growing number of hospital conversions. Conversion refers to the process by which a nonprofit entity opts to change its nonprofit status and forgo its tax exemption. In a conversion, investor-owned, for-profit companies buy community, nonprofit hospitals in deals that usually are secret, with costs and details not disclosed. Proceeds of the sales are suppose to establish charitable foundations.

HEALTH CARE IS A SERVICE, IT IS NOT A COMMODITY TO BE BOUGHT AND SOLD

Some how we've reached the point where our society thinks of the medical system not in terms of keeping patients well or helping them get better but instead as a fiercely competitive business in which survivors concentrate on making tremendous amounts of money.

The late Cardinal Bernadin, Archbishop of Chicago, had it right in his speech to The Harvard Business School Club of Chicago, He said:

> Health care . . . is special. It is fundamentally different from most other goods because it is essential to human dignity and the character of our communities. It is . . . one of those goods which by their nature are not and cannot be mere commodities. Given this special status, the primary end or essential purpose of medical care delivery should be a cured patient, a comforted patient, and a healthier community, not to earn a profit or a return on capital for shareholders.

The goal isn't health care anymore—the goal has become the care of the stockholder interest.

THE PROBLEM

Historically, the nonprofit hospital has, in general, assured that necessary services are available, that all populations are cared for, and that there is always a place to go for care. The goal of a for-profit hospital is just that—profit. The for-profits allegiance is to their shareholder, not the community—and certainly not the uninsured or poor. The for-profit hospital chains have the minds of piranha fish and the hearts of Doberman pinschers.

Whereas for-profit hospitals are accountable to their shareholders, nonprofit hospitals have another kind of accountability—to patients, to providers of care, to payers and to the communities in which they operate. Instead of producing a return on investments to shareholders, nonprofit hospitals have the inherent motivation and deep obligation to produce a different kind of return—that of quality care to their patients and overall good for the community.

The need to show a profit focuses the for-profit hospital on cost structure rather than on the structure of care. Their decisionmaking cannot help but he skewed toward shareholders rather than patients. Whereas nonprofit hospitals manage care because doing so improves health outcomes, for-profit hospitals manage the cost of care because it is the cheapest, most profitable thing to do. Their primary legal and fiduciary duty—to return a profit to the shareholders—puts patients and public welfare in second place.

In 1993, there were 18 conversions of nonprofit hospitals and health care plans. In 1995, there were 347. In the past 18 months, for example, Columbia HCA, the largest of the for-profit hospital chains, has completed, has pending, or is in the process of negotiating more that 100 acquisitions or joint ventures with nonprofit hospitals.

I have many concerns about the sale of nonprofit hospitals to for-profit corporations: too often the terms of the sale are secret; there are often conflicts of interest among the parties; the mission of the nonprofit foundation that results from the conversion may not be consistent with the original mission of the hospital—the funds in the resulting foundation are sometimes used for things like sports training facilities, flying lessons, or foreign language programs in schools; and the valuation price is often much less than it should be. Perhaps most important, quality and access to health care in the community is often significantly diminished.

COLUMBIA HCA—THE PAC-MAN OF THE INDUSTRY

Columbia HCA, the largest of the for-profit hospital chains, is characterized as the PAC-MAN of the industry—gobbling up nonprofit hospitals as it expands its market share in communities across the United States. Nationwide, Columbia HCA is riding high from dozens of acquisitions of hospitals that have made it not only the biggest—with 355 hospitals—but also one of the wealthiest for-profit chains with $18 billion in annual revenue.