

and review provisions of §801. I am also concerned that the level of consultation with, and analysis by, the Office of Management and Budget—as required by CRA—was minimal. Even so, I appreciate the corps' willingness to work with us in the spirit of bipartisan cooperation so as to move beyond the initial issue of submission to Congress under the CRA.

With this procedural issue set aside, we can now focus on the substance of these significant changes to the Nationwide Permit Program. The leadership of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and its Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee looks forward to reviewing the modifications, particularly to Nationwide Permit No. 26, and the overall impact of the January 23, 1997, Federal court ruling—American Mining Congress versus Army Corps of Engineers—invalidating the corps' so-called excavation rule. Congressional review of these recent developments should help in the overall effort to reauthorize and improve the Clean Water Act, including the wetlands permitting program.

HONORING THE NORTH PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND OF PICO RIVERA

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the members of Pico Rivera's North Park Middle School marching band. On Wednesday, January 1, 1997, this group of talented young individuals participated in the 108th Annual Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, CA, as the first group of middle school students to perform in this event in over 45 years. As I watched the North Park Middle School band on television, I was filled with pride that this group of talented youth from my congressional district was representing my community. It is through their dedication, hard work, and perseverance that the band members earned this distinct privilege, and they are to be commended.

On Monday, May 24, 1993, I stood before my colleagues in the House and honored this same group of young people for their commitment to excellence. I spoke of the band members and their parents who faced the board of education to demand that North Park Middle School's music program not be abolished. As a result, funding was continued, and the band was bestowed with one of the greatest honors possible: the opportunity to perform before millions of viewers in the 1997 Rose Parade.

The outstanding performance demonstrated by each of the band members is testimony to the leadership and guidance that the band's director, Mr. Ron Wakefield, has provided over the years. Because of Ron's dedication and belief in his young musicians, the band never gave up its dream of one day performing in the Rose Parade. Helping Ron were assistant director, Jose Diaz, parade coordinator, Lou Diaz, and Rhonda Cheat, colorguard adviser. I would also like to recognize North Park Middle School principal, Robert Martinez, vice principal, Dwight Jones, and the parents of the bandmembers for their support of the band's efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today in recognition of the young members of the North

Park Middle School band for their tireless efforts and outstanding achievements. This talented group of musicians has made the Pico Rivera community proud. I, too, am proud to represent such fine young men and women, and I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring them for their hard work and accomplishments.

THANK YOU, PETER KING

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Congressman PETER KING for his tireless and diligent work on behalf of the Irish people.

Congressman KING, who serves as the co-chairman of the Congressional Ad Hoc Committee on Irish Affairs, was awarded the Heart of America International Peace Award by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Padriac Pearse Division I, Jackson County, MO, on February 1, 1997. This honor was for his strong opposition to British oppression of the Irish people. Mr. KING was only the third leader to receive this prestigious honor. Previous winners of this award include Jerry Adams and Bernadette Devlin. All three have distinguished themselves through exemplary leadership in the area of human rights equalization in Northern Ireland. He was recently presented this award by the Ancient Order of Hibernians in my district.

Congressman PETER KING has traveled to the six occupied counties in Northern Ireland on 15 different occasions and is recognized as the leader in Congress on issues facing Ireland. He has been honored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Knights of Columbus, the Irish-American Fenian Society, the Irish National Caucus, and the Irish Northern Aid Committee.

His travels to Northern Ireland enabled him to witness hunger strikes, the Diplock Courts, and other monumental events. He accompanied President Clinton on the President's historic peace mission to Belfast and Derry in 1995.

Thank you, PETER KING, for your outstanding service to the Congress, the Irish-American community throughout our great Nation, and the Irish nationalist community abroad. I applaud your efforts and salute you as the 1997 Heart of America International Peace Award recipient.

HONORING FRANK VISAGGIO

HON. STEVE R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Frank Visaggio, who was selected to represent the United States in Taekwon Do's 1997 World Championships.

A team of six men and six women will compete against over 30 countries this July in St. Petersburg, Russia. The team competition includes four events: sparring, breaking, patterns, and team patterns.

Mr. Visaggio of Seacaucus, NJ, has been training in Taekwon Do for 15 years. He is the New Jersey State director of the International Taekwon Do Association, and is owner and head instructor of the Meadowlands Academy of Martial Arts.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in commending Frank Visaggio on all of his worthy accomplishments. I wish Frank and his teammates the best of luck in this summer's competition.

THE INDEPENDENT COUNSEL LAW

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 5, 1997, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

REFORMING THE INDEPENDENT COUNSEL LAW

Congress enacted the independent counsel law in 1978 in response to Watergate and the seeming inability of the executive branch to investigate and prosecute crimes by senior administration officials. The independent counsel, appointed by federal judges and working outside the executive branch, was intended to handle such cases in an impartial manner, thus restoring public confidence in the process.

Since the law's enactment there have been 17 independent counsel investigations at an estimated total cost of over \$115 million. Of those 10 ended with no indictments. Four others, including the Whitewater investigation of the President, are ongoing. There were several convictions in the Iran-contra investigation, although some were overturned on appeal.

Even though the law is not up for review until 1999, Congress is already considering proposals to reform the measure. A House subcommittee held hearings on the law last year, and numerous articles have been written on the issue, particularly in light of the ongoing Whitewater investigation. Some argue that the act has worked reasonably well, while others say it has led to costly and unending investigations and should be overhauled or scrapped.

HOW THE LAW WORKS

The independent counsel law generally applies to high ranking officials in the executive branch, including the President, Vice President, senior White House staff, and Cabinet members as well as members of Congress. The Attorney General can seek an independent counsel on her own initiative or on receipt of information alleging a violation of federal criminal law.

The Attorney General conducts an initial review of the matter. If she reasonably believes further investigation is warranted, she applies to a special three-judge panel appointed by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, requesting that the panel appoint an independent counsel. The panel selects the independent counsel, and defines the scope of the investigation. The independent counsel has the full range of investigatory and prosecutorial powers and functions of the Attorney General.

There is no specific term of appointment for independent counsels. They have unlimited budgets, serve as long as it takes to complete their duties, and may seek to expand the scope of their investigation. An independent counsel may only be removed by