

for his service here and for the civility he brought to this institution. We will truly miss him.

MOURNING THE PASSING OF HUMANITARIAN, ENTERTAINER
JOHN DENVER

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I mourn a friend and associate. The passing of singer-songwriter John Denver, over the Columbus Day recess, leaves a void in the world of humanitarianism and compassion.

I first met John Denver when we were working to create a Presidential Commission on World Hunger and the both of us were subsequently appointed to that commission by President Jimmy Carter in the 1970's. As a result of that commission's final report, I introduced legislation establishing a Select Committee on Hunger in the Congress. John Denver, along with our mutual friend the late singer-songwriter Harry Chapin, was instrumental in lobbying for the successful adoption of that legislation. Subsequently, the three of us often conferred regarding the problems of hunger and starvation throughout the world, but also the environment and the problems of nuclear proliferation.

All of us who had the honor and privilege of working with John Denver recognized his involvement with ecological concerns and his heartfelt love of humanity. His work on behalf of hunger in the late 1970's and early 1980's was significant, along with that of Harry Chapin, in shining the spotlight of public opinion on the problems of malnutrition.

In the mid-1980's, many performers in show business received publicity for their fundraising efforts on behalf of world hunger. We must not forget that these successful efforts would not have been attempted, yet alone achieved, were it not for the courageous, trail-blazing activities of both John Denver and Harry Chapin.

The December 20, 1976 issue of Newsweek magazine noted that "People write him letters from hospitals telling how listening to 'Take Me Home, Country Roads' or 'Poems, Prayers and Promises' has stopped convulsions or cleared up depressions. A long-distance swimmer navigated the shark-infested Cook Strait of New Zealand by singing Denver songs as she counted her strokes. In Lockport, NY, a woman regained her spirits after a mastectomy by listening to Denver songs all day—especially 'Sweet Surrender'."

Those who are familiar with John Denver's work are not surprised to learn of the amazing impact it has had on so many lives. His gift of expressing empathy and sincere concern were perhaps his greatest contributions.

John Denver has left us with a legacy of goodwill and also of quality entertainment. From his platinum recordings, to his appearances on the silver screen and television, he delighted and inspired audiences worldwide. Throughout his career he selflessly shared the spotlight when working with such stars as George Burns, Placido Domingo, Itzhak Perlman, and Kermit the Frog. Like his humanitarian efforts, his singing, writing, and acting talents will be missed by many.

He started his career with three guitars, an old Chevrolet and less than \$200 to his name. From such humble beginnings, John Denver rose to be counted among the brightest of America's stars. We will all be poorer from his loss.

I ask my colleagues to join with me in continuing to support the causes championed by John Denver and in extending condolences to John's three children, Jessie Belle, Anna Kate and Zachary, to the rest of his family, and to the millions of people whose lives were touched and influenced by this remarkable humanitarian.

STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION FOR
NEW YORK ARTISTS EQUITY ASSOCIATION

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 21, 1997

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of New York Artists Equity Association (NYAEA), now celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Since 1947, Artists Equity Association has been a strong advocate for legislation on behalf of visual artists, and has provided services to support the development of the visual arts in our communities. NYAEA not only fights for the future of the visual arts, but places the New York artistic community in the context of history, as a necessary component of society, one that enriches our lives.

New York Artists Equity Association's mission of education, awareness, and support for the visual arts has provided the basis for its constant efforts. By promoting emerging artists in its wonderful Broome Street Gallery, it has successfully integrated those artists into the larger community. By preserving endangered visual art work, it assures the record of our rich artistic past. Through educational outreach, it has developed a new audience which is constantly expanding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to commend NYAEA, under the leadership of its Executive Director, Regina Stewart, for supporting visual artists at a time when the resources they receive from the government are simply not enough. NYAEA has provided support for many visual artists who otherwise would not have received help. Through referrals, legal services, and health care programs, the Association helps ensure economic stability for visual artists who might otherwise be forced to abandon their talents due to economic difficulties. By providing communication within the community, it helps establish a strong support base for issues relevant to artists' needs.

I stand here today to thank New York Artists Equity Association for all it has done to advocate for visual artists, consistent with the needs of their community. I am proud that NYAEA is in my Congressional District, and that its work reaches far beyond my District to help visual artists in the larger community. I also want to thank one of the Association's Past Vice Presidents, Doris Wyman, who serves on my Arts Advisory Committee, consistently championing the needs of visual artists. Because of my ongoing work with this fine organization and their leadership, I know of their constant efforts to change regressive

policies on the arts and I commend them. For fifty years, NYAEA has supported visual artists and been a passionate advocate for their causes. In the current climate, NYAEA's non-partisan commitment is especially valuable. I salute New York Artists Equity Association for helping to assure a stable artistic community—one that is, and always must be, an integral part of our heritage and culture.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2160,
AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 6, 1997

Mr. BISHOP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the FY98 Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report. I am pleased that the report protects the peanut program and that it does not eliminate the subsidy for crop insurance for tobacco. It is difficult for many Americans, and many of my colleagues, to understand the profound impact that farming has on our nation. They live in cities where their food appears in supermarkets, not fully understanding the difficult and laborious efforts that brought the food to them. Spend one day on a peanut farm in my district, and you will know the effort that went into that jar of peanut butter. Family farmers are the backbone of America's agricultural community and the peanut program is one of the vital and necessary safety-nets that help protect that community.

The peanut program helps 20,000 American farmers and small businesses compete in the world market, while providing nearly 50,000 American jobs on farms, in processing plants and in related industries. Peanuts are the 12th most valuable crop in the United States and the 4th most valuable oil crop worldwide. In addition, the program provides consumers with an ample supply of one of the safest, most nutritious foods on the market. Because of the program, the United States will be the No. 1 exporter of edible peanuts this year.

The peanut program is no-net-cost program and in fact contains a budget deficit reduction assessment of \$83 million which would have been lost if the program was eliminated.

The program does not reduce consumer prices. Consumer prices have not changed from a year ago, despite the fact farm support prices were cut by 10 percent last year. Consumer prices for peanut butter remain the lowest in the world, at 11 cents a serving, the same price as 1988. Peanut butter prices are lower today than 10 years ago.

The environment is benefited by the program because peanut plants are nitrogen-fixing plants which help restore vital nutrients to the soil in rotation with other crops.

I have had serious questions about the GAO report that seems to be the main source of criticism to the Peanut Program. I do not believe that this report is entirely accurate or an objective presentation of data. It is really designed to give a skewed appearance. The USDA has commented on the "lack of objectivity," the "erroneous assumptions," and "lack of thoroughness" in the report. The GAO has