EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A BILL TO MAKE CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE PRODUCTS ELECTRONICALLY AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC

HON. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, Representatives PRICE, MORELLA, MCHALE, MEEHAN, WHITE and I are introducing a bill that will make CRS products available on a web site accessible by the public. Senators MCCAIN, COATS, FAIRCLOTH and ASHCROFT are introducing the same bill in the Senate.

Under the bill, Issue Briefs, Reports, and Authorization and Appropriation products will be made available 30 days after the first day that the information is made available to Members of Congress through the Congressional Research Service Web site. This delay will make sure that CRS has carried out its primary statutory duty of informing Congress before releasing information to the public. Also, it will allow CRS to verify that its products are accurate and ready for public release.

The bill requires the Director of CRS to make the information available in a practical and reasonable manner. In addition, the public will not be allowed to write responses or research requests directly to CRS. Members of Congress will still be able to make confidential requests which will not be released to the public.

Congress has worked to make itself more open and accessible to the public. I have yet to hear of a strong policy reason why we should not allow the public to access this information. This bill will enable us to further engage the public in the legislative process and fulfill one of our missions as legislators to educate our constituents about the issues that affect our times.

TRIBUTE TO MARY CULP

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mary Culp, who has served as the President of the Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce for the past year.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, ''To laugh often and much: to win the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children, to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty, to find the best in others, to leave the world a bit better whether by a healthy child, a garden patch, or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you lived. This is to have succeeded.''

Mary has dedicated a significant amount of time and energy to improving the standard of living for citizens in our community. For over a decade, she has played a leadership role in the Woodland Hills Chamber of Commerce.

Mary was selected as Member of the Year in 1987, and since that point she has held a variety of positions, including the Vice President of Membership, Vice President of Programs and the Vice President of Community Affairs. She is also the Director of the Foundation for Pierce College and the founder of a networking organization called the Calabasas Business Link.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring the dedication of Mary Culp. She has worked diligently to improve our community and is a role model for the citizens of Los Angeles.

GLOBAL WARMING

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 28, 1998

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, November 19, 1997 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

GLOBAL WARMING AND THE KYOTO SUMMIT

Later this year the United States will participate in an international meeting in Kyoto, Japan to discuss the problem of global warming. Global warming refers to a process by which manmade and natural emissions of carbon dioxide and other gases build up in the Earth's atmosphere and trap radiated heat coming from the Earth's surface. Normally, forests, grasslands and oceans absorb most of these gases and recycle them—so that while global temperatures might fluctuate over time, the overall system would be in balance.

The large-scale industrial development in this country and around the world, particularly in the last 100 years, many be upsetting that natural balance. Scientists believe that man is now generating more greenhouse gases than the environment can handle, thus causing global temperatures to rise. Over the last century the Earth's average surface temperature has increased by about 1 degree Fahrenheit. While one degree may not seem like much, it can mean significant changes in sea levels, crop harvests and weather patterns. For example, sea levels over the last 100 years have risen by 4 to 6 inches, resulting in thousands of miles of lost shoreline around the world.

The issue for U.S. leaders is how to respond to global climate change. Environmentalists and our allies in the industrialized world are urging the U.S. to take the lead in curtailing greenhouse gas emissions, primarily because we generate more of those gases than anybody else. Others say that limiting emissions in this way would have harmful effects on the U.S. economy and U.S. consumers. The challenge is to develop a policy which balances concerns about the global environment with concerns about our economic well-being.

The risks of global warming: Scientists generally agree that manmade emissions have an impact on the global environment, but are uncertain about the precise effects of human activity over time. They say that the range of possible outcomes is enormous—from modest benefits in some regions to total disaster in others. For example, we know that greenhouse gas emissions are up by 3.4% for 1996, as compared to an 8% combined increase over the previous six years, and that the ten warmest years on record have all occurred since 1980. We don't know, however, how much those manmade emissions contributed to the temperature increase.

The effects of global warming have been well documented, from the shrinking of glaciers and rise in sea levels, to changes in weather patterns. Higher average temperatures mean more evaporation of surface water, causing drought in some areas of the world and abnormally heavy rainfall in other areas. Some scientists predict more dramatic changes in the future. In the Midwest, for example, some are predicting that the Great Lakes will shrink, that the region will experience more unpredictable and violent weather patterns, and that over time Indiana farmers will have to shift to growing wheat and cotton rather than corn and soybeans.

The global debate: There are two sets of issues arising from any plan to curtail emissions of greenhouse gases. The first involves disputes between countries that are industrialized, such as the United States, Japan and Germany, and those that are developing, such as China and India. Industrialized countries account for more than 75% of carbon dioxide emissions, primarily from burning gasoline and other fossil fuels. The United States alone produces 20% of all greenhouse gases, even though we have only 4% of the world's population. Developing countries, in contrast, account for less than 33% of all global emissions, but that figure is expected to reach 50% in the next 10 years. The U.S. takes the position that an agreement to reduce greenhouse gases will be effective only if both the industrialized and developing countries agree to curb future levels of emissions. The developing countries respond that such restrictions will deny them the benefits of future economic growth, and keep their people poor relative to the industrialized world.

The second set of issues relates to how a global agreement would affect the U.S. economy and U.S. consumers. U.S. businesses say that an agreement would force them to adopt expensive pollution control methods, and that those costs would be passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices on gas, electricity and other goods. The net effect would be to slow economic growth and cut jobs. Environmentalists respond that U.S. industry made similar warnings about passage of the Clean Air Act, and those predictions did not come true. They argue that, despite the Clean Air standards, the U.S. is now enjoying a sustained period of economic growth and has the strongest economy in the world.

President's proposal: The President recently outlined a plan to curb U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases. He has proposed that the U.S. reduce emissions to 1990 levels, but do so over the next 10 to 14 years. European countries were calling for more rapid reductions. The President's plan would earmark $5 billion in tax cuts and spending to spur energy efficiency and the development of new