

devoted individuals, especially, to whom I pay tribute. Their caring and commitment to those in need is worthy of the highest praise and honor.

They have the gratitude of the community for their efforts in behalf of the less fortunate.

HONORING THE EAST SUBURBAN
YMCA CAMPAIGN

HON. RON KLINK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the East Suburban YMCA of Pittsburgh and the contributions of the men and women who helped to expand this wonderful community institution. On March 22, 1998, they will be holding their Grand Re-Opening Celebration. The East Suburban YMCA has always provided opportunities for people to grow in mind, body and spirit and thanks to their most recent campaign, will continue to serve the community for many years to come.

The initial planning for the East Suburban YMCA was done in 1962 and it has remained a presence in the area for over 30 years. The YMCA strives to develop character and leadership through its programs and applies Christian values and principles to all relationships. The East Suburban YMCA serves men, women, boys and girls in the area through a wide variety of programs and facilities. Thanks to the efforts of numerous volunteers and supporters, the YMCA has touched the lives of many people in the community.

I would like to especially salute the group of dedicated individuals who made the East Suburban YMCA Campaign and the upcoming Grand Re-Opening possible. Allow me to first thank the Chairs of the Campaign, A. Richard Kacin and Myles D. Sampson. Their leadership meant so much to the effort. There were also many campaign workers and local donors that I would like to applaud: Claudia Abbondanti, John Beale, Gus Bondi, Lynne Bryan, Jim Cimino, Tim DeBissse, David Dubois, Eddie Edwards, Julius Jones, Alvin Kacin, Ann Klingler, Bud Kuhn, Carol Morris, Eric Lytle, Anthony M. Brusca Jr., State Representative Joseph F. Markosek, Mike McIntyre, Carolyn S. Mento, Mary Anne Norbeck, Margaret Osbourne, Pete Raspanti, Ben Sampson, David Vick, Charles Turner, David Yunov, and the late Jack Cummings. In addition to these fine examples of devoted and committed citizens, I would like to recognize the East Suburban YMCA Board of Management for their strong support of the campaign. The board members are Barbara Agostine, Kathleen Ballina, Dennis D. Dansak, Paul Dern, James End, Clyde Gallagher, Jeff Herbst, Chuck Leyh, Cheryl Lydiard, Gary Miller, Tony Naret, Lynn Pappo, Jeffrey Russo, Joe Sciallo, Steve Sebastian, Carol Siefken, Dan Taucher, and Annette Testa-Young. Additionally, I would like to recognize the YMCA staff, Paul Gelles, James Kapsalis, James Rumbaugh, Bud and Jo Sickler, State Representative Terry Van Horne, and the Honorable Paul Zavarella.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to applaud all of these people for their devotion to the East Suburban YMCA Campaign. I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing their efforts

to improve and build upon the great legacy of service that the YMCA stands for.

OHIO HUNGER TOUR TRIP REPORT

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

HON. DEBORAH PRYCE

OF OHIO

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

HON. TED STRICKLAND

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 17, 1998

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we commend to our colleagues' attention the following report from a March 2-3, 1998 "hunger tour" of central and southeastern Ohio, in which we participated. The purpose of the trip was to investigate reports of increasing demand for emergency food at Ohio's food banks, pantries, and soup kitchens. We were surprised by what we found. Despite Ohio's strong economy, significant numbers of working poor and senior citizens are having great difficulty making ends meet, and are turning to charities to obtain adequate food. We encourage our colleagues to consider a similar tour in their own communities, to get a close-up view of the changing face of hunger, and the challenges facing the working poor and senior citizens in particular.

INTRODUCTION

Despite a booming economy, record low unemployment, a balanced federal budget, and unprecedented surpluses in many state coffers, there is mounting evidence of worsening hunger among the poorest Americans.

For more than a year now, foodbanks, pantries, and soup kitchens across Ohio and around the country have reported sharp increases in demand for emergency food, which are outstripping the charitable sector's capacity to respond to growing needs. A December, 1997 report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors found that demand for food relief was up by 16%. In January, 1998, my own informal survey of 200 of the nation's foodbanks revealed even sharper increases in hunger relief needs in many parts of the country. A September 1997 report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture found that in the Dayton area, one in eight people seek emergency food assistance every month.

To investigate such reports, and better understand the nature of this trend, I conducted a fact-finding mission to feeding programs in urban and rural Ohio communities from March 2-3, 1998. I was joined by my colleagues Representative DEBORAH PRYCE (OH-15th), Representative BOB NEY (OH-18th), Representative TED STRICKLAND (OH-6th) at site visits located in their districts. Ohio Senator MIKE DEWINE also was represented by an aide who accompanied the delegation for a full day.

Non-profit groups who supported the trip included the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks, the Ohio Food Policy & Anti-Poverty Action Center, and the Council for Economic Opportunities in Greater Cleveland, as well as individual foodbanks, pantries, and soup kitchens who hosted the delegation at stops in Columbus, Zanesville, Logan, MacArthur, and Dayton.

FINDINGS

What we saw and heard in the communities we visited strongly confirmed several emerging trends reported by foodbanks across Ohio and around the country:

Working people account for a large share of the increase in demand for emergency food, specifically people in low-wage and part-time jobs that offer few benefits and do not cover the cost of basic needs, including food.

Ohio is attempting to move over 148,000 households containing 386,239 persons from welfare to work over the next three years. The latest national data for December 1997 found that Ohio's twelve month growth in employment since December 1996 was 52,800 jobs, a slow growth rate of 1.0%. During the same period, Ohio lost 3,900 manufacturing jobs. New job growth has been in service sector employment, which generally paying minimum or just above minimum wage with few or no medical benefits. Despite a robust economy and an abundance of low-wage jobs in Columbus and other urban centers, significant pockets of joblessness and high unemployment persist in the more economically depressed parts of the state's Appalachian region.

The delegation visited the Southeastern Ohio Foodbank, which provides food to local charities in one of the poorest and most economically depressed areas of the state. In three of the nine counties served by that foodbank, between 40% and 50% of the people requesting emergency food were working full or part-time. In Meigs county, more than half of the people seeking emergency food assistance were working.

Not one person we spoke with did not want to work, and all expressed their shame and frustration at having to resort to foodbanks to put food on the table at the end of the month. One woman explained: "My children get excited to see food coming into the house—kids should get excited about toys, and circuses, and special treats, not the food we need to feed our family." According to the pantry director in MacArthur, Ohio, a rare job opening for a clerking position at a video store recently drew more than 100 applicants. Highest on that pantry's wish list were buses to transport people to minimum-wage jobs in Columbus.

At the Franklinton Food Pantry, the largest pantry in Franklin County, where more than 11,000 people seek food assistance each month, over 60% of all households in the community have incomes below \$15,000 per year (well below the \$16,050 poverty line for a family of four). A visit to the home of one food pantry client belied the common stereotype that people seeking charitable assistance are lazy freeloaders. Here was a couple with strong faith and family values, struggling to keep their family of seven together. Like many Ohio working families, for these people the pantry is no longer an emergency food source, but a regular part of their monthly coping and budgeting process to keep their family from going hungry. Their net income of \$600 every two weeks barely affords a food budget of \$100 a week, which must stretch to feed five teenagers (two of them taken in from a troubled family member). Their coping mechanisms include purchasing low-cost food, limiting the types of food they consume, and once a month getting food from the local food pantry, which helps feed the family "between pay checks." Such families have no cushion against unexpected expenses, such as major