

qualified to discuss and review America's approach to promoting religious freedom abroad. Its members include religious leaders who represent millions of Americans of all major faiths and denominations, and scholars who have dedicated their professional lives to the study of issues related to religious liberty.

In the course of their work, they interviewed such eminent figures as the Dalai Lama, Cardinal Daly of Northern Ireland and Pastor Robert Fu of China. The committee clearly took its work very seriously, and we take it seriously as well.

America is a leader in promoting religious freedom because it serves our interests and because it is right. With the committee's counsel, we hope to pursue that goal with even more vigor and effectiveness in the days ahead.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BOROUGH OF NORTH CALDWELL,
ESSEX COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the Borough of North Caldwell, Essex County, New Jersey.

The Borough of North Caldwell was part of a large tract of land known as "Horseneck" that was purchased by a group of colonists from the Indians who lived in the area in 1701. In 1784 a group living in Horseneck organized a Presbyterian Church Society and in 1787 they voted to change the name of their community to Caldwell in honor of the Reverend James Caldwell who had helped them form their church group. North Caldwell continued as part of Caldwell Township until the last 19th century, when citizens, wanting improved roads and a better school, felt they could better achieve these goals as an independent municipality.

Since its modest beginning, the Borough of North Caldwell has steadily developed into a thriving residential community, counting among its residents a nationally known portrait painter and an American Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner in poetry. While the area was originally farm country, North Caldwell soon had its share of local industry. By the early half of the 19th century a large bark mill was established, which boasted a water wheel that was five feet wide and eighteen feet in diameter. After changing ownership in 1846, the mill was converted to operate as a grist mill and a saw mill. By 1931, multistory buildings had been erected and a prosperous local economy was in full operation.

The ensuing years brought many complexities and the demand for organization of a variety of resources for citizens' needs. North Caldwell currently has a full-time professional staff, including a police department, which has grown from three officers in 1930 to seventeen today, and a fire department incorporated in 1922, which is 28 members strong. The Borough's excellent school system dates back to 1770, when the first schoolhouse was built. Several subsequent schools were built during the 19th century, and the first Board of Education was appointed in 1903. Today there are several schools in the Borough, including the

West Essex Regional Schools opened in 1961.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 100 years, the Borough of North Caldwell has prospered as a community and remains a thriving municipality today. By all accounts, it will continue to prosper in the future and I ask my colleagues to congratulate all residents of North Caldwell on this special anniversary year.

STATEMENT UPON THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROHIBIT THE ATTACHMENT OF NONEMERGENCY ITEMS TO EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILLS

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, "Emergency" supplemental bills should contain funding for just that—emergencies. They should not be golden opportunities to attach funding for pet projects or legislative riders.

That is why I have introduced this legislation to "prohibit nonemergency spending or legislative provisions in emergency appropriation laws." This bill will not effect nonemergency spending bills, supplemental or otherwise. It is my belief that emergency bills are larger magnets for nonessential spending and inappropriate legislative provisions because they have the greatest likelihood of passing.

Our government should spend money on many worthwhile projects and programs. But a responsible government should make those spending decisions during the course of considering annual appropriations bills and other nonemergency supplemental bills. We shouldn't slow down much needed emergency money, or bank on its urgency, to pass all sorts of extraneous measures.

This legislation is a way to assure the people I represent that nothing will be stuck into these emergency bills "in the middle of the night." I want people to start trusting Congress again!

IN HONOR OF HARRISON PUBLIC SCHOOLS BEING AWARDED THE TECHNOLOGY LITERACY CHALLENGE GRANT

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the House of Representatives I would like to congratulate the Harrison School District for being awarded the Technology Literacy Challenge Grant.

The Harrison Public School System understands that the Internet is not a novelty anymore. Increasingly it is an essential tool for information gathering.

The grant which totals over \$94,000, will be used to provide public Internet computers at Harrison High School, Harrison Community Center, and the Harrison Town Library. These funds will also pay for community Internet training programs. This program is not limited

to students. When the town's technology plan is fully implemented, all of Harrison's citizens will be able to share and collect information through the Internet. No one will be excluded from this virtual community because of a lack of equipment or expertise.

On May 31 Harrison Schools will be sponsoring a "Technology Fest." This event will open the schools to the public to share students' technology related projects. I would like to thank District Technology Coordinator, Frank A. Cappelle, and Superintendent John Di Salvo for making these educational opportunities possible.

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, as we examine proposed changes to the nation's health care delivery system, we must consider the vital role that public hospitals play in our communities. Recently, Dr. Bailus Walker, Director of the Health Policy Program at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies and Deitra Hazelwood Lee, a Research Analyst, prepared a report which is entitled, "The Future of Public Hospitals." The report gives in-depth insight of the problems confronting the nation with regard to the decline of public hospitals. The work is worthwhile reading and I am pleased to share it with my colleagues and others throughout the nation.

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC HOSPITALS

Public hospitals nationwide are struggling to provide medical care to those Americans who need it most—the poor, the underinsured, and the uninsured. Because of the growth of Medicaid managed care, reductions in federal and state government funding, and the rise in the number of people without insurance, some public hospitals no longer have the financial stability to stay afloat. Many are merging, converting to private institutions, or closing their doors.

In the past, most cities had at least one public hospital, and cities like New York and Los Angeles had entire public hospital systems. But between 1981 and 1993 the number of public hospitals fell by 25 percent, a trend that is accelerating. Now Congress plans to cut Medicaid funding given specifically to public hospitals that serve a large number of Medicaid, low-income Medicare, and uninsured patients. The pending budget cuts are also going to shrink public hospitals' revenues far below what is necessary to meet the many health care needs of those who rely on this system for treatment.

Given the popularity of privatizing services, and the apparent growth of so many forms of health care, some—though not the poor—may wonder, Why is it worth preserving public hospitals at all? Can't the rest of our health system pick up the slack? It would be nice if that were possible, but the facts prove otherwise. Indeed, already the tears in the public hospital safety net are creating a new healthcare crisis in its own right. It we continue to lose these hospitals, many African Americans and other minorities, especially in urban communities, stand to lose their last certain access to medical care.

Public hospitals provide a significant share of all hospital care for those who are socially

and economically underprivileged. As hospitals of last resort, they have become a health care safety net because of their policy of admitting anyone, insured and uninsured alike. They also have a tradition of striving to be culturally sensitive. Finally, public hospitals provide essential medical services—which few clinics can offer and private hospitals often find unprofitable—such as emergency care, trauma care, burn care, and neonatal care, and they provide these vital services for the entire community.

The importance of this situation is brought into sharper focus by the increase in the number of uninsured. The most recent data suggests that there are more than forty million people in the United States who lack health insurance, including more than seven million African Americans. The number of uninsured is growing steadily as the cost of insurance continues to rise and as full-time, full-benefit employment remains scarce for urban minorities. Many full-time positions are being replaced as well by temporary or part-time jobs without health coverage. If the number of uninsured continues to grow, public hospitals will be the most affected because a large percentage of their patient base is the uninsured.

Many large, urban public hospitals also conduct medical education and research, which benefits the entire health care system. Many serve as teaching hospitals, where they train students. In addition, some urban public hospitals are major employers in the cities they serve. Closing these hospitals therefore increases the potential unemployment of both skilled and unskilled workers given the changes not only in the health care industry but in other related industries as well.

Many states have modified their Medicaid programs by shifting their method of delivering health care to managed care. Federal waivers now allow states to require that their Medicaid recipients enroll in managed care organizations, and many states have already modified their Medicaid programs with this new requirement. As of June 1996, this changeover had been carried out by 29 states and the District of Columbia.

This change in Medicaid policy is causing public hospitals to lose a large percentage of their patient base to managed care organizations. Approximately 43 percent of public hospitals' patients are covered by Medicare, Medicaid or other public insurance, and an equal proportion are uninsured. Even more important, 50 percent or more of these hospitals' revenue has been based on Medicaid payments. Unless they can effectively compete for low-risk Medicaid patients, they may soon lose so much revenue that they will simply have to close.

In addition to the managed care changeover, Congress plans to cut the Medicaid funding that has long been given specifically to public hospitals that serve large numbers of Medicaid, low-income Medicare, and uninsured patients. This special assistance, known as Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) payments, is set to be reduced by \$10.3 billion over the next five years according to the proposed Balanced Budget Act of 1997.

According to the National Association of Public Hospitals, federal DSH payments account for 13 percent of public hospitals' total revenues and pay for 40 percent of the cost of treating uninsured patients. The spending budget cuts are therefore going to shrink public hospitals' revenues far below what is necessary to meet the many health care needs of those who rely on this system for care.

The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a research and policy think tank which attempts to increase black involvement in public issues, recently held a

series of forums on these issues, including a Capitol Hill briefing chaired by Congressman Louis Stokes. The forums were supported by a grant from The Commonwealth Fund of New York. What emerged from these forums was a set of six policy options and positions that, if adopted, could go a long way toward ensuring that the health care resource that public hospitals represent to inner city residents is preserved.

First: Maintain support from the community and local government by ensuring that these groups and officials are well informed and can participate in the decisions affecting the survival of public hospitals.

Second: Public hospitals should aggressively compete with managed care organizations for low-risk Medicaid and Medicare patients.

Third: State and local governments should upgrade urban public hospitals so they can have a realistic chance of competing for patients.

Fourth: Urban hospitals should reduce or reorganize their staffs to reduce their costs and improve quality service. A reduction in cost along with an improvement in public perception will help public hospitals compete.

Fifth: Federal and state governments should give Medicare and Medicaid subsidies to hospitals based on their service to the poor and uninsured.

Sixth: Federal and state governments should establish a way to monitor the care given by urban public hospitals.

Public hospitals today are suffering from a condition that, if left untreated, may prove fatal. The importance of their survival needs to be recognized and addressed. If we lose these safety-net institutions, many people will no longer have access to any medical care. The health of the people who live in urban communities—the majority of whom are African American, Hispanic, and other minorities—depends on public hospitals' remaining viable American institutions.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I was traveling with the President in Africa yesterday, March 25, 1998, and was unable to vote. I would have voted in favor of the McCollum-Conyers amendment to H.R. 2589 (Rollcall No. 68). I would have voted against the Sensenbrenner amendment to H.R. 2589 (Rollcall No. 69). I would have voted in favor of the Pombo amendment to H.R. 2578 (Rollcall No. 70). I would have voted in favor of H.R. 2578 (Rollcall No. 71).

CELEBRATING THE RETIREMENT OF JAMES ALEXANDER AND ARISTEO TORRES

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, The United Steelworkers of America (USWA) Local 1010, a union that has represented the Inland Steel labor force since early this century, has worked tirelessly over the years to better the

living conditions and increase the living standards of Inland steelworkers and the communities in which they live. It is my distinct pleasure to announce that Local 1010 will be celebrating the retirement of two of its devoted members, Mr. James Alexander and Mr. Aristeo "Art" Torres, who retired from Inland Steel in January of this year. The celebration in honor of James and Art will feature an evening of dinner and music, and will be held today, March 27, 1998, at the American Legion Post #369, in East Chicago, Indiana.

James Alexander, a life-long resident of Gary, Indiana, began his dedicated career with Inland Steel in 1957. Over the years, he has held several positions within the company, including those within the coke plant, open hearth, cold strip, and 80-inch rolling operator. Perhaps James' most noteworthy achievement, however, was his devoted service to Local 1010, where he served as a respected union voice for his fellow steelworkers for 35 years. As a union representative, James held a variety of offices, ranging from safety steward to financial secretary, and he was elected union representative under six different administrators. Through his work with the union, James had the opportunity to meet several United States presidents, including Dwight Eisenhower, John Kennedy, and Richard Nixon. In addition to his service to the union, James devoted much of his time to community initiatives. He spent 21 years on the Gary Public Transportation Board, held the office of 1st Vice-President of the Gary Housing Commission, and is currently a precinct committeeman. James has also been an active member of his parish, St. Monica and Luke Roman Catholic Church, for 50 years.

A native of East Chicago, Indiana, Art Torres worked at Inland Steel as a craneman for 46 years. Throughout his career, he remained active within Local 1010, serving as assistant grievor, trustee, chairman of education, and board member. Realizing the importance of a unified membership, the focal point of Art's efforts with Local 1010 was educating steelworkers about the union and their rights as laborers. In addition, he participated in numerous pickets, including the Bridgestone/Firestone strike in the 1950s. Art has also been politically active over the years, serving as state delegate, working on various political campaigns, and carrying out the vital function of mobilizing voters within his community. In addition, he has been a long-time member of the Union Benifica Mexicana (UBM), an organization for Mexican-Americans, where he has served as an officer and chairman of various activities. In working for the betterment of Local 1010 and his community, Art takes great pride in his strides to be a good role model for young people, stressing the importance of earning a good education.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating James Alexander and Art Torres on their retirement from Inland Steel. James' family, consisting of his wife, Terry, and their eight children, Melanie, James Jr., Robert, Michael, Marcus, Barbara, Terese and Terrell, should be proud of his efforts. Art's wife, Cecelia, their children, Elizabeth and Angelina, and their grandchildren, Kathy and Jason, should also be very proud of his many achievements. Indeed, James' and Art's work for the labor movement and their communities has served as a beacon of hope and pride for all great