

under way. But what good is a national dialogue if the participants do not have all the information they need to participate in an informed and meaningful debate? Today I am offering legislation to help foster a genuine dialogue about Social Security. As we thoughtfully look at ways of personalizing and modernizing our current system, we need to ensure that the discussion is a careful one, and we need to include those most affected by the program—current beneficiaries. My legislation will help educate seniors about their status in the current system by providing them information about their current benefits. As the Ways and Means Committee today holds a hearing on a proposal to conduct a National Dialogue on Social Security in 1998, my legislation is designed to build on this idea by helping Americans understand the problem this system faces and design a long-range program to modernize Social Security.

This legislation is a sunshine bill, much like my pilot program enacted into law in the 104th Congress. It is designed to assist seniors better understand their contributions and benefits under the social security system. *Beginning January 1, 1999, beneficiaries of Social Security will receive two annual statements detailing: (1) The total wages and self-employment income the individual has earned; (2) the total contributions of the employer, employee and self-employment from wages; (3) the total amount paid to the individual as benefits, and; (4) an explanation of the statement in easily understood terms.*

Numerous seniors in my district find it ironic that other retirement benefit programs like mutual funds, IRAs and the like, provide this type of information, in writing, on a quarterly basis—and many provide participants direct 24-hour access by telephone. My bill would require that the Social Security Administration provide reasonable information in a reasonable timeframe.

As we know, Social Security is an unfunded pay-as-you-go system. Today's benefits to the elderly are paid by today's taxes from the young. Recently, the government's own actuaries reported that Social Security's Old-Age and Survivors Insurance and Disability Trust Funds will go broke in 2030. By that time, payroll taxes on fewer than two workers will support each retiree, a sharp decline from 1980 when the ratio was 3.5 to 1—and an even further decline from 1950 when the ratio was 16 to 1. This will occur as a result of demographic factors in the system and is not the fault of seniors.

Short-term fixes of the past to increase revenue or reduce benefits will be unsuccessful in postponing insolvency. Furthermore, the Social Security Administration's own pessimistic estimates indicate that by 2040 a combined employer-employee payroll tax of 40 percent could be required to pay benefits. Raising the already burdensome payroll tax for the 18th time in the history of the program is simply not an option.

Unfortunately, many seniors, including my own mother, are not aware of the state of the system or the impending crisis. The lack of information provided to them and every other senior is simply unacceptable. Seniors across the country have a desire—indeed, a right—to know about the status of their participation in the Social Security system. My bill would guarantee seniors access to this important information and include them in our national dia-

logue. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

IN HONOR OF IRENE SILLIMAN

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

**STEVE C. LaTOURETTE**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, my colleague Mr. LATOURETTE, and I rise today to honor a woman who is truly dedicated to our nation's troops, Irene Silliman. Mrs. Silliman is a harbinger of goodwill and warmth to the United States Navy, providing them with slippers to keep them warm on the decks of their cold ships.

A 72-year-old grandmother from Madison, OH, Irene Silliman started what has turned in to a national project by providing hand-knitted slipper socks to sailors on her grandson's vessel. After receiving a letter from her grandson requesting a pair of the socks, Silliman determined that she would make extra pairs for his shipmates. She organized a group of friends and began a phenomenon called "Operation Toasty Toes" that has engulfed the senior population of Northeast Ohio.

After receiving several calls from interested volunteers, Silliman spearheaded an effort to make these Toasty Toes slipper socks for the entire crew of the U.S.S. *Corney*, the destroyer on which her grandson is stationed. National newspapers have picked up the story and a multitude of citizens nationwide are now feverishly working on new pairs of slippers to send to the troops.

Irene Silliman is truly devoted to her country and the well-being of our servicemen and women. Her selfless effort to organize a crusade to provide warmth and comfort to our soldiers is truly a testament of her patriotic spirit. Mrs. Silliman wished to show our American troops that she and others cared about them and through their efforts, this has been accomplished.

My fellow colleagues, join me in saluting a true patriot whose selfless devotion to our American troops is evident through her efforts, Irene Silliman.

SALUTING CEASAR CHAVEZ

**HON. KAREN MCCARTHY**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor today to rise and salute one of the most inspirational leaders of our country, Cesar Chavez. Cesar Chavez is a legend within the Latino community and our nation. He is one of my heroes as well. This past Saturday, March 28, 1998, I had the pleasure of participating in a street dedication ceremony renaming a street in the predominantly Hispanic community on the west side of Kansas City in my Congressional District, Avenida Cesar Chavez. The festive atmosphere of the ceremony was enhanced by the presence of Richard Chavez, Cesar's younger brother,

who has continued the work which Cesar started to benefit all working men and women. Visiting with Richard and listening to his experiences demonstrated the extraordinary nature which one, and later many, dedicated individuals can have on bettering our community and nation.

In 1962, when Cesar Chavez founded the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA), his purpose was to unite all of the Mexican farm workers in California in their struggle for better wages and working conditions.

Cesar Chavez was a very charismatic leader, who headed a movement that used only nonviolent tactics. Cesar Chavez used strikes and boycotts as leverage in applying economic pressure on the employers to settle wage disputes and improve the work environment.

Cesar Chavez was a visionary who built consensus. He realized that the existence of oppression towards any group of people was wrong, so he joined the fight to help further the cause for Filipino farm workers. In 1965, during the Grape Boycotts, Filipino and Mexican workers united and protested the low wages and poor working conditions. In 1970 this remarkable effort resulted in an amicable resolution. For nearly a decade like many of my generation, I refused to consume grapes to show solidarity.

Muchas gracias otra vez por permitirme esta oportunidad compartir mi sentimiento sobre un grand heroe Americano, Cesar Chavez.

Mr. Speaker, I salute and applaud the efforts of Cesar Chavez and the community leaders in my Congressional District who have the vision to ensure that his memory and works will permanently be remembered for future generations, not only through the dedication of Avenida Cesar Chavez, but by the historical translation passed on from generation to generation.

IN RECOGNITION OF CARIBBEAN  
THEATRE WEEK APRIL 5-12, 1998

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the inaugural celebration of Caribbean Theatre Week. This unique week was made possible through the diligent efforts of persons at the Daily Challenge, and WLIB Radio, special community leaders and performers who have tirelessly committed themselves to developing events that celebrate the entire spectrum of Caribbean creativity. Caribbean Theatre Week, which will be held in New York on April 5-12, 1998, is a magnificent forum for presenting the significant artistic contributions made by Caribbean performers.

In reviewing the history of the Caribbean, one can ascertain the importance of theatrical production in the Caribbean region. The advent of the Caribbean theatre contributed to the increase in national independence in the Caribbean islands. The theatre often served as a powerful tool for political communication that both defined and reflected the island's culture and identity.

Caribbean Theatre Week is the brainchild of Mr. Dawad Philip, a poet, artist, and editor of

the Daily Challenge in Brooklyn, New York. Mr. Philip and other organizers had the vision to develop an annual arts performance week that would bring a sharper focus on the depth and scope of this burgeoning theatre movement. They hope to bring the natural beauty of the Caribbean islands and the rich variety of cultures in the Caribbean islands to the theatre audience.

The event was developed more than two months ago with just one event. Caribbean Theatre Week developed a momentum of its own, resulting in a week of culture-driven events and activities. WLIB Radio and the Daily Challenge have convened an impressive gathering of Caribbean playwrights, actors, producers, writers, and performance artists—representing the English, French and Spanish Caribbean—to help celebrate the week-long series of events. Such a fascinating spectrum of the arts and theater during Caribbean Theatre Week will help the residents of New York deepen their appreciation for the vitality of the Caribbean island traditions.

The organizers of the event have created a multi-dimensional showcase of Caribbean culture. Caribbean Theatre Week will showcase a Children's Storytelling Festival, Oral Folk Tradition, a Poetry Festival and poetry reading, a celebration of Caribbean dance, a symposium examining the state of Caribbean theater in New York, and Caribbean Street Theatre. The event will conclude with the grand finale, the New York Premiere of "Jean and Dinah," performed by the Lord Street Theatre Company of Trinidad and Tobago.

As we approach the new millennium, the ties that bind nations globally are becoming more apparent. Events such as Caribbean Theatre Week serve as the perfect vehicle to understand and embrace the various cultures of the world. I applaud Mr. Dawad Philip, WLIB Radio and other organizers of Caribbean Theatre Week for celebrating the beauty, culture, warmth, and diversity of the Islands and its people. I also salute the artists and performers; their work exemplifies the wide range of talent in the Caribbean community.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CDR.  
GEORGE W. HOOVER

**HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM**  
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Commander George W. Hoover, who passed away last month and now lays at rest in Arlington National Cemetery. Commander Hoover was a friend to me, a friend of America, and one of the greatest intellects the country will ever produce.

It is one thing to briefly summarize his life: born April 24, 1915, in New Kensington, Pennsylvania; joined the Navy in 1934 and served a distinguished career as an aviator and an engineer; married, father of two children; consultant to numerous government agencies and leading engineering and aviation firms; and responsible for several innovations critical to the progress of aviation engineering and instrumentation. I want to focus on a couple of things that were particularly meaningful to me.

First, in 1945, Commander Hoover was designated Navy Helicopter Pilot Number 10.

Today as we take for granted the availability of helicopters for military and civilian use, Commander Hoover ranks among the pioneers of aviation as one of America's very first helicopter pilots.

Second, Commander Hoover was responsible for bringing the Martin Baker Ejection Seat from Great Britain into the United States. On my 300th air mission in Vietnam, May 10, 1972, my RIO Bill Driscoll and I rode the descendants of the Martin Baker seat to safety upon the explosion of my F-4 Phantom. Thanks to Commander Hoover, the availability of this seat, and the improvements he and others made to it, ensured that a pilot could eject safely from a disabled airplane, even from an altitude of zero, on the carrier deck.

No remarks I make can possibly pay appropriate tribute to Commander Hoover's remarkable career. It should be noted that in 1999, Commander Hoover will be nominated for induction into the National Museum of Naval Aviation "Hall of Honor" at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Florida—the cradle of all Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard aviators, and the place where a worthy memory of his many accomplishments can be kept.

His memory will also be kept by his widow, Lona, and his two children. The life of a Navy wife is hard. Her husband is sent on deployments for months at a time. For the decades that Commander Hoover served his country in the Navy, I want it to be recognized that his wife Lona served America and the cause of freedom with vigor and distinction just the same.

Let the permanent RECORD of the Congress of the United States now pay tribute to Commander George W. Hoover, and to his widow Lona and his family. God bless them for their service to America and to one another.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. FRANK RIGGS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, March 30th, Tuesday, March 31st, and early Wednesday, April 1st, I was unable to be present in Washington, D.C. due to other business of a personal and family nature and therefore missed several recorded votes in the House. If I had been present, I would have voted:

"No" on rollcall number 81: passage of H.R. 3581, the Campaign Reform and Election Integrity Act.

"Aye" on rollcall number 82: passage of H.R. 34, the Illegal Foreign Contributions Act.

"Aye" on rollcall number 83: passage of H.R. 2608, the Paycheck Protection Act.

"Aye" on rollcall number 84: passage of H.R. 3582, the Campaign Reporting and Disclosure Act.

"Aye" on rollcall number 85: providing for consideration of H.R. 3579, the FY 98 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

"No" on rollcall number 86: motion on ordering the House to proceed in secret session.

"No" on rollcall number 87: a motion to recommit H.R. 3579 with instructions.

"Aye" on rollcall number 88: final passage of H.R. 3579, the FY 98 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act.

"Aye" on rollcall number 90: Providing for consideration of H.R. 2400, BESTEA.

"Aye" on rollcall number 91: Providing for an adjournment of the two Houses.

I ask that this be recorded in the appropriate place in the RECORD.

COMPREHENSIVE COAL ACT  
REFORM ACT (H.R. 2231)

**HON. EARL POMEROY**

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to add my name as a cosponsor of the Comprehensive Coal Reform Act Reform Act (H.R. 2231), a bipartisan bill introduced by Representative DEBORAH PRYCE (R-OH) on July 27, 1997.

This bill seeks to address certain inequities created by the reachback tax provisions of the Coal Industry Health Benefit Act of 1992 (the Coal Act) while protecting the health benefits of retired mine workers. Under the Coal Act, former employers of retired coal miners are required to pay assessments to a Combined Fund to finance retiree benefits. I believe it is appropriate for former employers to bear this financial responsibility. However, in some cases, the reachback tax is applied unfairly, requiring employers with limited liability to pay large assessments while employers with significant liability pay a lower assessment.

H.R. 2231 attempts to correct these inequities while ensuring that the Combined Fund has adequate resources to pay retiree benefits. The language of H.R. 2231 may or may not be the perfect means to achieve these goals. However, I believe that the bill represents an honest attempt to reach a compromise on this important issue.

THE MEDICAID CHILD ELIGIBILITY  
IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1998

**HON. KEN BENTSEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 1, 1998*

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation, the Medicaid Child Eligibility Improvement Act of 1998, to help more children obtain the health care they need through Medicaid. There are currently three million children in our nation who are eligible for Medicaid but are not receiving the care they need because they are not enrolled in the program.

This legislation would allow public schools, child care resource and referral centers, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) workers, and child support agencies to make the preliminary decision that a child is eligible to enroll in Medicaid so that they can receive coverage while waiting for a full Medicaid eligibility determination. Schools and these other agencies are on the front lines of caring for children and can help to educate their families and enroll them in Medicaid.

Under the Balanced Budget Act enacted last year, States received a new option under Medicaid to grant "presumptive eligibility" to certain children on a temporary basis as their