

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my Democratic colleagues from both the House and Senate today to re-introduce the Patients' Bill of Rights. This legislation came within five votes of passage in the last Congress. We are anxious to work with our colleagues to pass this important legislation this year.

Patient protection should not be a partisan issue. This is the health care issue that continues to top this list of my constituents' concerns—and I represent California which has the longest history of managed care in our country.

The Patients' Bill of Rights is a bill whose time has come. It builds on bills that have previously been introduced, on recommendations from the President's Advisory Commission on Quality in the Health Care Industry that met last year, on legislative efforts of various states, and on consensus agreements among consumer groups, many providers, and certain health plans.

As more and more of our population joins managed care plans, the need for federal oversight of plan quality grows greater. Patients deserve to know that their health plans are held accountable to a basic set of consumer protection standards. That is what the Patients' Bill of Rights will do.

Though many states have enacted consumer protection bills, they cannot regulate many of the health plans within their borders due to our convoluted health care system. Federal action is required.

The Patients' Bill of Rights creates a set of federal standards that assures patient access to covered benefits and that holds health plans accountable for their actions.

The most important components of the bill are as follows:

Health Plan Accountability: The Patients' Bill of Rights holds health plan administrators to the same level of accountability for making medical decisions as doctors.

Under current law, if an individual receives health care benefits through his/her employer, and a health plan makes a medical decision to withhold treatment that harms a patient, that health plan's only responsibility is for the provision of benefits that had been denied. The estimates are that some 125 million Americans are in these types of health plans.

So, if a health plan denies a woman a mammography and she later is found to have advanced breast cancer—which would have been detected much earlier with the screening exam—that plan's only liability is the cost of the mammogram that was not provided.

The remedy for this is straightforward: if health care plans are going to be making medical decisions, they must be held accountable to the same standards for legal liability as health care providers.

In the last Congress, I introduced a free-standing bill (HR 1749) to correct this glaring inequity. The Patients' Bill of Rights corrects it as well. Our legislation would allow states to determine whether or not a consumer can bring a state cause of action against health plan administrators whose medical decisions result in harm.

There has been much ado about this provision and its potential impact on business. The fact of the matter is that few employers are making medical decisions regarding their employees' health care. And, the bill goes so far as to explicitly protect employers from any liability as long as they are not involved in any medical decision-making.

There has also been much talk that the courts will soon resolve the issue of ERISA preemption. Unfortunately, we are years away from a point when such resolution will be found. Courts across the country are developing very different interpretations of ERISA preemption and, consequently, there is no clear direction from their decisions. This is too important an issue to wait any longer. A legislative solution is warranted.

External Appeals: Guaranteeing consumers access to a strong, independent external appeals process is also one of the best ways to assure the provision of quality care.

Unless there is an outside, independent decision-making body for which consumers can ultimately take their appeals, we will not obtain real consumer protection. Health plans that hold a financial interest in denying care simply cannot be the final arbitrators about whether care will be provided.

The Patients' Bill of Rights calls for health plans to contract with independent external appeals entities certified by the State or the Department of Labor to provide timely analysis of the plan's actions with the help of neutral health care professionals. There are defined timelines in the legislation to ensure that consumers facing serious, time-sensitive health consequences will be able to have their appeals resolved and the appropriate care provided. For example, in the case of urgently needed care, the external appeal entity could take no more than 72 hours to issue a decision.

Disclosure of Consumer Information: Today, consumers have no way of comparing health plans based on easily understood quality criteria. The collection of standardized data and the provision of standardized comparative information is a key component of the Democratic legislation.

As an example of this lack of ability to compare plans, PacifiCare, the largest Medicare HMO contractor and an insurer in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, refused to release its NCQA data last year. NCQA data may not be perfect, but it is the only measure out there today by which consumers can compare health plans. PacifiCare should not have been allowed to get away with holding that data confidential.

One of my principal concerns has always been that managed care plans are quick to sign people up and collect monthly premiums, but slow to see a large number of their patients. I think that every health plan should be required, upon enrollment, to conduct an examination of each new enrollee before the health plan can receive any premium dollars.

The strongest argument in support of managed care is that when it is done well—and is

truly coordinating the care of patients—it can produce superior health outcomes. The idea of a care coordinator helping a patient through the typical health care maze is a good one. But, how can a managed care plan fulfill that role if the patient is never seen, let alone evaluated?

The Patients' Bill of Rights does not go so far as to require that a plan examine a patient before premiums can be collected. However, it does require that data be presented to consumers on the plan's preventive health care services. In this way, consumers and employers will be able to compare health plans as to how fare the plan really goes toward managing patient's health. This data is available for prospective as well as current plan enrollees.

These are several of the key consumer protection and quality provisions in The Patients' Bill of Rights. I chose to highlight these points because I think they are fundamental components of meaningful managed care reform. But the bill contains many additional important protections.

The Patients' Bill of Rights is the most consumer-oriented managed care reform bill that has been introduced. Instead of protecting providers, it aims to help consumers. It calls for: direct access to OB-GYNs; direct access to specialists for patients with chronic medical conditions; coverage of routine patient costs for approved clinical trials; participation by plan physicians and pharmacists in the development of drug formularies; access to an out-of-plan specialist if no appropriate in-plan specialist is available—at no extra cost to the patient; and the creation of a consumer ombudsman in each state to help consumers make health care choices that meet their needs.

Again, I am pleased to join with my colleagues today to introduce this vitally important legislation. I look forward to working with members in both bodies and on both sides of the aisle—and with the President—to pass federally-enforced, consumer-oriented managed care legislation this year.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PRISON SAFETY ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, on January 6, 1999, I introduced the District of Columbia Prison Safety Act, a bill to assure the safety and well being of District of Columbia and other Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) inmates, who may be placed in private prison facilities, as well as the safety of communities where the prisons are to be located. This provision has become necessary as a result of § 11201, the 1997 District of Columbia Revitalization Act (P.L. 105-33), which requires that the BOP house in privately contracted facilities at least 2000 D.C. sentenced felons by December 31, 1999 and at least 50% of D.C. felons by September 30, 2003. Under the Revitalization Act, the Lorton Correctional Complex

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

is to be closed by December 31, 2001, and the BOP is to assume full responsibility for the maintenance of the District's inmate population. My bill would give the Director of the BOP the necessary discretion to decide whether to house D.C. inmates in private prison facilities, and if so, when and how many.

The Revitalization Act privatization mandate marks the first time that the BOP has been required to contract for the housing of significant numbers of inmates in private facilities. The extremely short time frames were placed in the statute without any reference to BOP capabilities or the capabilities of private prison vendors. I am introducing this bill because recent events have driven home the necessity for better informed and expert judgment and calculation before decisions to contract out inmate housing are made.

On December 3, 1998, the Corrections Trustee for the District of Columbia released a report on the investigation of problems arising from the placement of D.C. inmates in the Northeast Ohio Correctional Center (NEOCC). This highly critical report documented numerous violent confrontations between guards and inmates, an escape by six inmates, and the killing of two other inmates. The Trustee's report strongly and unequivocally criticized virtually all aspects of the operations of the NEOCC.

It should be noted that the company that runs the NEOCC, Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), is the most experienced in the country. However, the industry is a new one with relatively few vendors and few bidders for substantial work. The NEOCC experience is fair warning of what could happen if BOP proceeds on the basis of an automatic mandate in spite of the evidence that has accumulated in Ohio and around the country. The mounting problems have been so troubling that the BOP was forced to revise the original request for proposals (RFP), fearful that similar problems would occur. The bid now requires two separate facilities. The new process uses two RFP, thereby separating low security male inmates from minimum security males, females and young offenders. Furthermore, the RFP for low security inmates now requires the BOP to consider prior performance of the vendors before awarding the contract. However, the new RFPs put the BOP, perhaps hopelessly, behind schedule for the privatization mandated by the Revitalization Act.

The experience of the private sector argues for a much more careful approach than Congress realized at the time the 1997 Revitalization Act was passed. For example, the 50% quota for privatization far exceeds any comparable number of similar inmates currently housed in a private facility from a single jurisdiction.

My provision does not bar privatization, but it could prevent further privatization disasters. BOP may still decide to house the same, or a different number in private facilities. The purpose of this provision is to keep the BOP from believing that it must go over the side of a cliff, avoiding more sensible alternatives, because Congress said so.

BEST OF LUCK TO REV. W.E. SPEARS, JR.

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Sunday, November 21, 1998, Dallas bid farewell to one of its most notable religious leaders. The Reverend W.E. Spears, Jr., will preach his final sermon as the pastor of Progressive Baptist Church in Dallas.

Mr. Speaker, his departure is important to note because he founded Progressive Baptist Church with his vision, energy, and hard work 52 years ago. Throughout that time, he has provided spiritual guidance, community service, and compassion to several generations of parishioners.

Mr. Speaker, the growth of his church in both numbers of members and services is a direct testimony to his faith and work ethic. When it first began, the church had about 10 members. Today, Progressive Baptist Church boasts a membership of 500.

Under his leadership, Progressive Baptist Church promotes the teachings of Christianity to many families in the Dallas area. In addition, for several decades, Progressive Baptist Church served area school children who could not attend the George W. Carver School because of School district boundaries.

He joined his late wife in opening Spears Mortuary and an ambulance service that provided services despite the family's ability to pay. This brought much-needed services and relief to families amid times of tremendous personal loss.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Spears is a great example of leading a church in serving its community beyond the pulpit and directly into the community. However, while I join many of my constituents in thanking him for his leadership and service at Progressive Baptist Church, I am happy to say that he will not be removing himself from the community. He does not plan to leave behind his work. Fortunately for our children, he is committed to helping them be productive citizens. As he mentioned, "I'm still making a point of helping young people make citizens out of themselves, and I have pledged myself to working in the community at least 5 days a week."

Mr. Speaker, I am both grateful to Reverend Spears' 52 years of service at Progressive Baptist and his commitment to continue to serve our community. On behalf of my constituents from the 30th Congressional District, I wish him success in his future endeavors.

HONORING SALLY JAMESON

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the appointment of my good friend, Mrs. Sally Jameson as executive director of the Charles County Chamber of Commerce.

For the past 6 years, Sally has been affiliated with the Charles County Chamber of Commerce; 5 of those years she served the Legislative Committee.

Prior to her appointment, Sally was the director of the Waldorf Jaycee Community Center since it opened in 1992. Today, it has evolved as a focal point for Charles County and is currently undergoing expansion.

Mr. Speaker, she is working with the Charles County public schools on a student exchange with students in Waldorf, Germany, and with the Charles County commissioners on a twin-city establishment between Waldorf, MD and Waldorf, Germany.

Sally is a life-long resident of Charles County and resides in Bryantown with her husband, Gene and two children, Donnie and Michelle.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced that Sally will be a tremendous asset to the Chamber of Commerce and southern Maryland. I am proud to be her Representative in Congress and I ask you and the remainder of my colleagues to join with me in acknowledging the appointment of this fine American.

THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KNOX MINE DISASTER

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues the fortieth anniversary of an infamous day in Pennsylvania's Eleventh Congressional District, the Knox Mine Disaster. This Sunday, a state historical marker will be unveiled to commemorate the tragedy. I am pleased to have been asked to participate in this event.

January of 1959 brought unseasonably high temperatures and drenching rains to the Wyoming Valley. The Susquehanna River began to surge wildly and reached near flood stage by the evening of January 21. Most area residents were worried about their homes and businesses and gave little thought to the potential disaster underground. Miners at the Knox Coal Company's River Slope mine in Luzerne County had expressed fears for weeks about the conditions at the mine, but their complaints fell on deaf ears. On the morning of January 22, seventy-five miners headed for work in the May Shaft and six miners headed to the River Slope. The six laborers soon summoned a veteran miner to hear the shrill cracking sounds of the ceiling props. As he stepped into the mine to investigate, the roof of the mine gave way and water poured into the mine. The miners scrambled out of the mine to safety and quickly reported the flooding to mine officials who ordered evacuation of all adjoining shafts.

Thirty-three of the miners quickly escaped the churning waters as the river took over the mine, but forty-five men remained trapped below as the river swirled into the breach. Thirty-three miners eventually made their way up an abandoned air shaft located a few hundred feet upriver from the breach. Twelve men remained missing.

Mr. Speaker, hope for these twelve brave miners endured for several days as family members kept vigil on the river bank. Eventually, methane gas began to flow from the mine and the officials had no choice but to end the rescue attempt. Each of the survivors had his story of escape and told the stories of those who did not.

For sixty-four hours after the disaster, the river poured more than two and a half million gallons of water into the shafts each minute. The cave-in allowed more than ten billion gallons of river water to surge underground. For three days, crews pushed, pulled, and hoisted fifty ton railroad cars into the void. They added four hundred one-ton coal cars and at least twenty-five thousand cubic yards of dirt and rocks. Finally, the giant hole was plugged. Pumping began to save the other shafts and search teams were dispatched to look for bodies.

Mr. Speaker, the Knox Mine Disaster was the beginning of the end of anthracite coal mining in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Officials eventually discovered the company had illegally dug beneath the river bed which extended far beyond legal mining boundaries. No proper surveying had been done and although industry standard was thirty-five feet of rock cover, the miners had followed company orders and quarried up to a mere six feet below the river. Knox Coal Company had ignored orders from federal inspectors to cease operations. Several company officials were indicted. Although deep mining continued in the Northeast into the 1970's, the high cost of resulting new safety regulations coupled with declining demand eventually ended deep mining in the northern coal field.

Mr. Speaker, the Knox Mine Disaster is a turning point in the history of Northeastern Pennsylvania. The image of the grieving families huddled along the banks of the river, exhausted survivors climbing out of the earth and huge train cars being heaved into the whirlpool is still fresh in the minds of most of the area's residents. The disaster is commemorated in the local press every year and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will dedicate a historical marker this year. I join with the families of both the victims and the survivors of this horrible disaster in commemorating their bravery and remembering their sacrifice.

REFORM OF THE MINING LAW OF
1872

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, today it is my privilege to introduce, once again, comprehensive legislation to reform the Mining Law of 1872. I am pleased to note that the distinguished gentleman from California, GEORGE MILLER, and PETER DEFAZIO of Oregon are joining me in introducing this measure.

Some may view the introduction of this legislation as an exercise in futility. They are those who benefit from the production of valuable hardrock minerals from certain federal lands without payment of either rent or royalty to the American public. They are those who benefit from the hodgepodge of minimal regulation governing the reclamation of these lands and the lack of suitable environmental safeguards to protect the American public. Yet others, others view the introduction of this measure as a ray of hope. They are those who are concerned that in the last year of the 20th Century the United States still actually allows multinational conglomerates to mine gold, silver

and copper from our federal lands for free. They are those, countless citizens, who live in the vicinity of these operations, who must contend with maimed landscapes and polluted streams. And all of us must wonder, is this the type of legacy we wish to leave to future generations?

The Mining Law of 1872 today is an anachronism that will not die. Enacted in an era when the policy of the United States was to populate the West partially by making free land and free minerals available to those who would brave an unsettled and wild region, it has resisted substantial reform despite countless attempts to modernize it and make it responsible to more current policies governing the management of our public domain.

The bill we are introducing today is the very same which passed the House of Representatives by a three-to-one margin during the 103rd Congress. Reintroduced during the 104th and 105th Congresses, it was held hostage by the Resources Committee. Even under a Republican majority, I remain convinced that if allowed to proceed to the House floor, this bill or something similar to it would pass the full House of Representatives.

The issue of insuring a fair return to the public in exchange for the disposition of public resources, and the issue of properly managing our public domain lands, is neither Republican or Democrat. It is simply one that makes sense if we are to be good stewards of the public domain and meet our responsibilities to the American people. This means that the Mining law of 1872 must be reformed.

A TRIBUTE TO JAMES W.
HOLLAND

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen of Indiana's First Congressional District, James W. Holland. On Saturday, January 16, 1999, Mr. Holland, along with his friends and family, will celebrate his retirement and honor his five decades of public service. The celebration will take place at Marquette-on-the-Lagoon in Gary, Indiana.

In 1943, James Holland graduated from Rock Island High School in Illinois. After earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Education from Northwestern University in 1950, he continued his education at Valparaiso University, completing a Master's degree in Liberal Studies. From 1951 through 1968, he taught twelfth grade Government and Economics in Gary. In 1968, Mr. Holland became the executive for the City of Gary Model Cities Program. Subsequently, as Principal Associate of Jacobs Company, he authored administrative manuals that became the national standard for the Model Cities Program. Mr. Holland devised and established basic Model Cities structures for 15 cities, which led to lengthy on-site consultancies in major United States cities. In 1980, he was one of twenty Fellows selected annually from hundreds of nominees to attend the Harvard University Fellow Program for Senior Executives. Additionally, he served as Deputy Mayor of the City of Gary from 1976 through 1988. As Deputy Mayor, he super-

vised 38 department heads and administered an over \$40 million annual budget, as well as over \$100 million in federal programs.

Mr. Holland has dedicated a substantial portion of his life to the betterment of Northwest Indiana, especially the transportation systems of Gary, Indiana.

After 10 years of dedicated service, Mr. Holland is retiring as President of Gary Intercity Lines and General Manager of the Gary Public Transportation Corporation. Under his management, Gary Public Transportation Corporation has won numerous safety awards and other awards from the Indiana Transit Association and the American Public Transportation Association. Additionally, Mr. Holland has served on numerous transportation committees. Mr. Holland was Chairman of the Northwest Indiana Regional Planning Commission, as well as a past member of the Executive Board of the Northwest Indiana General Assembly Study Commission on State Transportation.

On this special day, I offer my heartfelt congratulations. Mr. Holland's large circle of family and friends can be proud of the contributions this prominent individual has made. His exceptional work in the transportation sector of Northwest Indiana will be greatly missed. Fortunately, the community as a whole will continue to profit from his unselfish involvement to make Northwest Indiana a better place in which to live and work. I sincerely wish him a long, happy, healthy and productive retirement.

HONORING THE FIELDING
INSTITUTE

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Fielding Institute.

The Fielding Institute has been a leader in distance learning for mid-career professionals since it was founded in Santa Barbara, California in 1974.

With the development of a revolutionary "Learning Community" concept that provides lifetime learning opportunities for its scholars, the Fielding Institute has maintained its leadership in the field.

The Institute has built an outstanding reputation for its graduate programs, including doctoral programs in Clinical Psychology, Human and Organizational Development and Educational Leadership and Change and a masters program in Organizational Design and Effectiveness.

Their approach offers highly effective, customized, professionally rich and interactive learning processes, along with significant possibilities for learning created by emerging electronic technologies.

In providing a graduate learning experience using technology that is uniquely tailored to the professional and personal needs of adult learners, the Fielding Institute has been at the forefront of the distance learning movement.

And so Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the Fielding Institute. They have provided 25 years of service and outstanding graduate learning opportunities to the scholars of California, the United States and the world.

TRIBUTE TO THE AMERICAN
HONDA MOTOR CORPORATION

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the American Honda Motor Corporation and Mr. Eric Conn, Senior Vice President, for establishing the "Honda Player of the Year Award."

This is the eighth year that American Honda has recognized the most understanding professional soccer player in the United States to defend the colors of our country as chosen by 200 members of the press from the United States and abroad.

In addition, American Honda, recognizing the importance of our youth, designated the American Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO), as a beneficiary of their fine program.

Past recipients of this most prestigious award include: Eddie Pope (1997), Eric Wynalda (1996 and 1992), Alexi Lalas (1995), Marcelo Balboa (1994), Thomas Dooley (1993), and Hugo Perez (1991).

The 1998 awards finalists included Kasey Keller, Eddie Pope, and Cobi Jones.

The winner received a New Honda Accord EX and \$5,000, the latter donated to AYSO on his behalf.

It is because of the awareness and dedication of responsible corporate entities in our country, exemplified by the American Honda Motor Corporation, that today's true role models can become more well known.

Please join me in saluting the very important contribution to excellence made by American Honda.

ON ENTERING A LETTER TO THE
HONORABLE DAVID DREIER
ABOUT THE DELEGATE VOTE

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to correct an erroneous statement by my good friend and colleague from California, concerning the constitutionality of the Delegate vote in the Committee of the Whole. On January 6, 1999, the gentleman from California, Mr. DREIER, made the remark concerning the Delegate vote in response to my statement on withdrawal of my right to vote in the Committee of the Whole, despite the fact that D.C. residents alone among American citizens pay federal income taxes while lacking full representation in the Congress. He said that a federal court had settled the constitutionality of the Delegate vote against the District. As my letter points out, the opposite is in fact the case. Both the District Court and the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia have ruled that the Delegate vote is constitutional. The text of the letter follows:

January 7, 1999.

Hon. DAVID DREIER
Member, U.S. House of Representatives, Cannon
H.O.B., Washington, DC.

DEAR DAVE: I am writing to point out an error in your statement on the House Floor,

as recorded in today's CONGRESSIONAL RECORD that "in 1993 a Federal judge found a House rule change to allow Delegate voting in the Committee of the Whole could be unconstitutional, so that clearly was addressed at that time." I did not realize that you were unaware that the opposite is the case. Both the U.S. District Court and the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia found that Delegate voting is constitutional. In *Michel v. Anderson*, 817 F.Supp. 126 (D.D.C. 1993), and subsequently on appeal in *Michel v. Anderson*, 14 F.3d 623 (D.C.Cir. 1994) the courts that heard the case found that the House is the sole arbiter of its own rules and that it could amend its rules to allow Delegate voting. I assure you that I would have never have been so reckless as to take to the floor and argue for something already declared unconstitutional by the courts.

Delegate voting was originally applicable to all Delegates and included jurisdictions whose residents do not pay federal income taxes. After the vote was withdrawn, several Members, including some on your side, indicated they would support the vote in the Committee of the Whole for District residents because of our federal income tax-paying status. Given the fact that there must be a revote if the Delegate vote proves decisive in the Committee of the Whole, it seems needlessly punitive for a Congress that regards taxes as a priority, to deny this vote, harmless to your side, to Americans who are third per capita in federal income taxes. If, as I believe, the constitutional matter has been cleared up, I hope that you will have occasion to reconsider the Committee of the Whole vote for the District residents.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MS. RUTH
COLLINS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I stand to congratulate Ms. Ruth Collins Sharp Altshuler, national recipient of the Outstanding Philanthropist Award for 1998. The third Dallasite to win the award, she will receive this honor from the National Society of Fund Raising Executives at its 36th International Conference on Fundraising, April 26 in Miami Beach.

Mr. Speaker, the award is one of meritorious commendation of an individual's commitment and work in philanthropy and fund raising on the behalf of notable causes that help others. Before Mrs. Altshuler, Ross Perot and Cecil H. Green, cofounder of Texas Instruments, were recipients of the award in 1986 and 1994, respectively. Based on her work, she is both deserving of the award and to be noted in such esteemed company.

She is the founder of the local Alexis de Tocqueville Society, whose members nationally give \$10,000 or more to the efforts of the United Way each year.

She has contributed countless time and energy to the Salvation Army, particularly the Carr P. Collins Social Service Center, named in honor of her father. At the Carr P. Collins Social Service Center, many homeless families have access to shelter, food, and rehabilitation programs.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Altshuler is also known for leading the cause of advocacy and understanding on issues of mental illness and mental illness research. She has been able to make individuals more aware of this issue through her ability and courage in sharing her own family experience. Where many families are naturally apprehensive to talk about the subject, she is discussing this issue in a frank and open manner. As a result, many people look at the issue in a different framework, and are feeling positive about developing solutions to mental illness.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to pay tribute to Ruth Collins Sharp Altshuler and her being named as the national recipient of the Outstanding Philanthropist Award for 1998. I thank her for her efforts and wish her continued success.

IN MEMORY OF MEGHAN
ELIZABETH PRICE

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of Meghan Elizabeth Price, who was the President of the Student Government Association at the University of Maryland, College Park. Meghan tragically died in a car accident on December 29, 1998. She was a senior Government & Politics major and was preparing to attend law school in the fall. She is survived by her parents, Karlyn "Susan" Price and John "Sonny" Price, as well as her brother Jonathan.

Meghan was a respected student leader in College Park. She served in many leadership positions on campus. Prior to her election as President in October, she held the positions of Vice-President of Campus Affairs, Legislative Director, and the Cambridge Community Legislator for the Student Government Association. While she was the Vice-President of Campus Affairs she helped to found the Flagship Initiative, which is a student initiated effort to lobby the General Assembly for increased funding for the University of Maryland, College Park. She also worked closely with University of Maryland Officials, including the President and the Athletic Director, to improve the quality of life for all of the members of the University of Maryland community.

Meghan's activism began before she arrived in College Park and extended beyond just the College Park community. She attended Southern Garrett High School where she was a member of the Student Council for four years and was the President her senior year. She was also the Drum Major of the Marching Band, and a four-year member of the softball team. In addition she interned at EMILY's List and volunteered on my re-election campaign.

Meghan was a member of Omicron Delta Kappa Fraternity and a graduate of the College Park Scholars Public Leaders Program. She participated in the Blind Skiers Program at Wisp and the annual University of Maryland Holocaust Memorial Vigil.

It is regrettable the such a young, motivated and inspirational leader is lost so early in life. Meghan touched so many people in her short time with us and set an example that will shine forth for all to see, even in her absence.

I join with the University of Maryland community in expressing my sorrow in the loss of a visionary leader and an admired human being. May God bless those she left behind.

IN HONOR OF MONSIGNOR
MASAKOWSKI

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring a momentous occasion to the attention of my colleagues—the Centennial Celebration of the St. John the Baptist Church in Larksville, Pennsylvania. On Sunday, January 24, the community will gather to commemorate this anniversary and I am pleased to have been asked to participate. His Excellency, the Most Reverend James C. Timlin, D.D. of the Archdiocese of Scranton will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving to begin the festivities.

The church was founded by a group of Polish immigrants, mostly peasant farmers from Galicia, who settled in the Wyoming Valley to work in the coal mines. Toward the end of 1898, a group who had been attending another local church, decided to construct a Polish Roman Catholic Church in Larksville. They formed a committee to meet with the Bishop and obtained permission to begin construction. A wooden frame church was completed in December 1898 with Reverend R.A. Nowicki as Pastor. The church was officially dedicated in February 1899.

A school and parish meeting hall were constructed soon after and the parish continued to grow. On December 18, 1919 tragedy struck the parish when fire destroyed the church, school, and part of the rectory. The sturdy immigrant parish was not to be discouraged and quickly began the task of rebuilding.

Under the leadership of Reverend Paul A. Kopicki, construction of a new St. John the Baptist Church began in May of 1920. On December 25, 1920, the new church was dedicated at midnight mass.

The new church was reborn spiritually as well, with Father Kopicki starting the parish picnic, minstrel shows, and children's talent shows. A choir was formed under the leadership of Benjamin Jachimowicz. By 1928, the church had a new rectory and by 1935, a new school was opened. The school, which was run by Bernadine nuns, closed in 1959 due to a shortage of teachers and lack of space.

Mr. Speaker, the list of priests who have been spiritual leaders of St. John's is lengthy. On September 7, 1971, my good friend Father John Masakowski became the twelfth pastor of the church. Father John is from my hometown of Nanticoke and brought years of experience and wisdom to St. John's. Father Masakowski reinstated the now-famous parish picnic and renovated the interior of the church. He reorganized the church societies and had a grotto constructed to Our Lady of the Pines in the church park. In 1990, Father John was made Monsignor, much to the pride of his faithful parishioners. This year, they will celebrate his Golden anniversary of ordination.

Mr. Speaker, I have enjoyed the parish picnic at St. John's many times over the years of my tenure in Congress. Its parishioners are decent, hardworking people, many of whom I

am proud to call friends. I am pleased to have this opportunity to bring the history of this proud and thriving parish to the attention of my colleagues. The history of the church is a testament to their dedication and perseverance. I congratulate Monsignor Masakowski and the congregation on this momentous milestone.

IT IS TIME TO CHANGE THE STATUS OF PERSIAN GULF EVACUEES

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, two years ago, during the 105th Congress, I considered it a duty to introduce private relief legislation on behalf of 62 families who were air-lifted out of Kuwait during Iraq's invasion of that country. These families were brought out of Kuwait involuntarily, most without the opportunity to bring private belongings or assets with them. Nearly all have children who are U.S. citizens. As indicated by their having been cleared by the INS and the FBI, the Persian Gulf Evacuees [PGE's] are shown to be professionals who are gainfully employed, none of whom have become wards of the States in which they live, received welfare assistance, or otherwise broken any U.S. laws while in the United States.

Because of their actions in Kuwait at great risk to themselves, to provide safe harbors of Americans trapped that country during Saddam Hussein's attack, these Persian Gulf evacuees deserve our utmost respect and gratitude.

I urge my colleagues to take note of this private relief bill, because the Persian Gulf evacuee families are scattered all over the United States, and one or more families may live in your Congressional District, and they need your support to help get the bill out of committee and enacted into law.

President George Bush, in air-lifting them out of Kuwait during those perilous days just prior to U.S. Military intervention, did so to protect their lives. He gave the evacuees five years of "safe harbor" in the United States during which time the evacuees made every effort to adjust their status to that of permanent immigrant. After President Bush left office, President Clinton extended their stay here for an additional two years.

At the time of the air-lift, more than 2,000 individuals were involved; during the intervening years, all but 62 individuals and families have "adjusted" their status and have gained permanent immigrant status in the United States where, as I have said, they are self-supporting and have brought no financial burden upon the United States for their care and keeping.

These 62 remaining individuals and families have not had their status adjusted in the intervening years because many of them ran into barriers between themselves and the Immigration and Naturalization Service [INS] that kept appropriate interviews from being conducted with the evacuees and further kept the FBI from starting and completing necessary background checks on the evacuees to assure they had committed no crimes while in the United States.

Today, I have reintroduced a Private Relief Bill naming 62 individuals and families who are known as Persian Gulf evacuees [PGE's] and I urge my colleagues to join with me to serve those evacuees who may live in your Congressional District to ensure appropriate action is taken this year to grant them permanent immigrant status in the United States.

IN HONOR OF JUDGE MARILYN
MORGAN

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a true humanitarian and an outstanding member of my hometown community of San Jose, California.

Judge Marilyn Morgan has served on the United States Bankruptcy Court with honor and distinction for over ten years. To acknowledge her exemplary service on the bench, as well as her prior service as an attorney and trustee, the consumer bankruptcy community of Division 5 of the Northern District of California is honoring Judge Morgan with the Fresh Start Award. This honor is given to those who have provided outstanding leadership on issues concerning the bankruptcy system and those who strive to improve it. The Fresh Start award also honors those who have worked hard to maintain equity, integrity, fairness and compassion in the system. Judge Morgan is a shining example of the best in our judicial system.

Judge Morgan demonstrated her commitment to fairness and justice even before pursuing her career in the field of law by working in the civil rights movement in Atlanta with (now Congressman) John Lewis and others.

Prior to serving on the bench, Judge Morgan practiced law in San Jose, and was always mindful of the needs of our community. She provided pro-bono legal assistance to underserved members of our community and served as secretary of the Pro-Bono Project. Judge Morgan represented both debtors and creditors in chapter 7 and chapter 13 cases. She also found time to serve as a Chapter 7 trustee, and in that capacity was a founder and officer of the National Association of Bankruptcy Trustees (NABT).

As an expert on bankruptcy law, Judge Morgan has participated as a panelist or moderator at seminars conducted by groups such as the Norton Institute, the American Law Institute-American Bar Association, and the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys. She also served as a panelist before the National Bankruptcy Review Commission as it studied the need for bankruptcy reform.

While practicing law, Marilyn Morgan participated in the activities of several professional associations, serving as President and Treasurer of the Santa Clara County Bar Association and as a trustee of the Santa Clara County Law Related Education Committee, to name a few. She is an active member of the National Conference of Bankruptcy Judges. In addition, she has been an officer or director of many community organizations in San Jose, including the Rotary Club of San Jose, the American Red Cross and the Downtown YMCA.

Judge Morgan has shown leadership on many issues of concern to the bankruptcy community in San Jose. She was instrumental in the creation of the Chapter 13 subcommittee which has provided a valuable forum for

communications between the Bench and the Bar, as well as a vehicle to elevate the practice of law.

On January 14, 1999, Judge Morgan received the Fresh Start Award. I ask my col-

leagues to join me in congratulating Judge Morgan for receiving such a special award. She is to be commended for her efforts to improve the consumer bankruptcy system in her community