Outside the classroom, Geoff has been a four-year member of the St. Francis DeSales Marching Bank. In his senior year, Geoff is the leader of the percussion section. In addition, Geoff has demonstrated his dedication and commitment to excellence by obtaining his Eagle Scout ranking with the Boy Scouts of America. He has also been a Scout patrol leader and summer camp counselor.

Mr. Speaker, at this point, I would ask my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to Geoffrey Earnhart. Out service academies offer the finest education and military training available anywhere in the world. I am sure that Geoff will do very well at West Point, and I wish him much success in all of his future endeavors.

COMMEMORATING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF THE SISTERS OF ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the founding of The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi, a congregation that is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

In 1849, thirteen secular Franciscans emigrated from Bavaria to establish a religious order to meet the education needs of German immigrants in Milwaukee. As such, The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi are the first Third Order regular Franciscan congregation founded in the United States.

Over the years the work of the congregation has extended to virtually every walk of life and touched countless thousands through ministries of healing, teaching, reconciliation and liberation.

The congregation is involved in diverse ministries, which include: Making affordable housing units available through Canticle Court and Juniper Court, promoting undergraduate and graduate education at the renown Cardinal Stritch University, making affordable rental units available to non-profit groups through the Marian Center, and offering community-based care for all ages through the innovative work at the St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care. In addition, ministries are maintained by the congregation throughout the U.S. and Taiwan through St. Colett's organizations in Wisconsin, Illinois and Massachusetts. And, a collaborative relationship is maintained with a Franciscan congregation in Cameroon, West Africa.

In all, nearly 350 Sisters and 75 Associates promote the mission of the congregation in areas of education, pastoral ministry in parishes, hospitals and nursing homes, music ministry, elder housing and day care service to those with developmental challenges, and volunteer work of all kinds.

In the last week of July, The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi will bring its mission to television in a series of public education messages called, ''We are Franciscans with a Future.'' On Sunday, May 30 the 150th celebration will culminate with the May Crowning and on Open House.

Then, in August, another celebration will take place with two other congregations who share the same roots of foundation: The Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration from La Crosse, Wisconsin, and The Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist from Meriden, Connecticut. In addition, some 35 friends and parishioners from parish church in Ettenbeuren, Bavaria will join the celebration. They will also visit the motherhouses of all three religious congregations.

Mr. Speaker, it is with immense pride and gratitude that I commemorate The Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi on its jubilee anniversary and the wonderful contributions the congregation has made to the spiritual, academic, and temporal quality of life in communities close to home and around the world.

H.R. 1592, THE REGULATORY FAIRNESS AND OPENNESS ACT OF 1999

HON. RICHARD W. POMBO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. POMBO. Mr. Speaker, it is rare for both Houses of Congress to reach an agreement—fully bipartisan legislation. The Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) was enacted in this manner in 1996. This bill eliminated the famous Delaney Clause for residues in raw and processed foods—replacing it with a scientific, rational standard of ''reasonable certainty of no harm.'' Food, agricultural and consumer interests, as well as the pesticide industry saw the passage of FQPA as an opportunity to assure that sound science is paramount in EPA's determinations on the use of chemicals on crops, in homes and for public health concerns. FQPA required the EPA to establish scientific, rational, sound and reasonable standards.

Mr. Speaker, sound science is what the authors intended and expected. This is what Congress wanted—sound science as the rule's foundation. Further, the new law provided an additional safety factor to protect infants and children, and new ways of assessing pesticide benefits and risks. This is something Congress fully supported and continues to support. Despite strong congressional support, implementing the law at the regulatory level has been a very difficult and unnecessarily complex process.

In fact, only a few months after the law was passed, the FQPA implementation process broke down. Members of Congress voiced their concern. The problems were so great and concerns from America's agricultural industry so substantial that Vice President Gore sent a memorandum to both the Department of Agriculture and the Environmental Protection Agency on April 8, 1998. This memorandum laid out the White House's plan for putting FQPA's implementation on the right track.

The White House's plan for FQPA implementation contained four basic principles: sound science in protecting pubic health, regulatory transparency, reasonable transition for agriculture, and consultation with the public and other agencies. America's agricultural and urban pest control community supported the Vice President's approach.

Mr. Speaker, now, a year after the White House got directly involved in FQPA's implementation process, it remains derailed. It has become clear to me that Congress must again revisit this issue. It is my humble hope, we can revisit FQPA the way we left it, in a bipartisan spirit of cooperation.

Mr. Speaker, Congress wanted a law to eliminate the scientifically inadequate and outdated Delaney Clause. What Congress and the Nation got was much worse. In fact, the EPA has failed to provide scientifically sound guidance to the regulated community. The EPA's approach follows a path toward great economic harm for agricultural producers and pest outbreaks causing diseases concerns for urban and suburban communities it is an approach that is without a scientific foundation.

Farmers, the food industry, pest control interests, and many others are understandably concerned. Americans want and deserve a fair, workable implementation of the bipartisan law. Americans want and deserve rules that are based on real information and sound science. Americans want and deserve rules that follows the Vice President's stated goals. Americans want and deserve rules that fit FQPA's requirements.

In order to achieve these results, I along with Mr. TOWNS, Mr. CONDIT and Mr. BOYD have introduced ''The Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999.'' This legislation maintains the strong safety standards established by FQPA. This bill simply establishes a scientific-based process for implementing the law which will be based on sound, peer reviewed science and open for public review. Further, it ensures that agricultural producers across the country, who are already facing tough times, will not be adversely impacted by loss of crop protection tools because the EPA failed to use good science in reviewing crop protection tools under the new standards of FQPA. It will also ensure the consumers' food supply and food quality will not be affected by incomplete and faulty data.

MY LEGISLATION ACCOMPLISHES THE FOLLOWING

The Regulatory Fairness and Openness Act of 1999 lays out the problems that the EPA has faced over the last few years in implementing the law. In many cases, the EPA simply does not know what to do because the scientific protocols for assessing certain crop protection products under the new law have not been developed. Further, it highlights the extreme negative consequences if the law is implemented improperly. For example, organophosphate insecticides are used on 70 percent of the acres treated in the United States and are used to control of vector insects that spread diseases. If the EPA continues on their current path, many of these products could be lost. Farmers will be left without replacement products and exposed to major losses due to pest outbreaks. Consequently, this will lead to either a shortage of quality produce or increase in import from countries where their farmers do not follow our stringent guidelines. It will also limit the ability of agencies to control vector insects, thus causing health risks for millions of Americans.

This legislation will require the EPA to perform a simple ''transition analysis'' on products before releasing any information about the safety of the product to the public or making final tolerance decisions. If the transition analysis determines that the Administrator is using assumptions when existing data makes the use of the assumption unnecessary or is using worst case estimates, anecdotal, unverified, or

scientifically implausible data, the Administrator cannot make final re-registration decisions on those products until sufficient time has been provided to allow the data to be developed, submitted and subsequently evaluated by the Agency.

The Administrator is required to issue rules to implement the FQPA properly within one year of enactment of this bill. Further, the Administrator is required to issue guidelines specifying the kinds of information that will be required to support the issuance or continuation of a tolerance or exemption from the requirements for a tolerance and shall revise such guidelines from time to time.

My bill provides protections, especially to small acreage farmers to ensure that they will not be left without crop protection tools. This legislation requires the Administrator to report to Congress priorities for registering new products that will replace products that are being removed from use and expedite the registration process. This will allow the farmers to continue to provide a safe, reliable food supply.

The USDA and EPA are required to assess the potential negative trade effects of implementing FQPA. The program will monitor the competitive strength of major United States agricultural commodity sections in the international marketplace. Such commodity sectors include fruits and vegetables, corn wheat, cotton rice, soybeans and nursery and forest products.

Mr. Speaker, FQPA must be implemented properly or grave results will occur. My bill gives this Congress a chance to do something good for the American people and the American Farmer. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation.

THE LIVING ORGAN DONATION INCENTIVES ACT OF 1999

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I never thought that I would come before my colleagues to discuss the importance of organ donation. Frankly, it was never an issue until seven years ago—organ donation was something other people did and organ transplants affected other people's families.

Well, I am here to tell you that this issue can affect anyone. You never know.

My husband, John, suffers from Polycystic Kidney Disease. John endured years of dialysis while awaiting a kidney transplant. In 1996, after waiting three years for a kidney, we finally received word that the local organ procurement organization (OPO) in Gainesville, Florida found a matching organ.

In a country where about 5,000 Americans die each year because there are not enough donated livers, kidneys and other organs to go around, John was clearly one of the lucky ones.

The sad fact is that the disparity between the supply and demand of organs available for transplant contributes to the deaths of eleven people daily. This is not just a problem, this is a health care crisis. Between 1988 and 1996, the number of people on the waiting list for an organ transplant increased by 312 percent and the number of wait list deaths increased 261 percent. Additionally, in 1996, a new name was added to the transplant waiting list every nine minutes.

Viable, transplantable organs are provided from two primary sources: brain-dead victims of trauma (cadaveric donation) or living organ donors. The National Kidney Foundation (NKF) believes that we have only begun to tap the potential of living organ donation. Scientists and organ donation proponents alike firmly believe that increasing the frequency of living organ donation would not only increase the availability of organs but also lessen the transplantation rejection rate and reduce costs associated with dialysis.

However, living donors are faced with loss of income attributable to the time away from work needed for evaluation, surgery and recovery, making it difficult to pay rents, mortgages and other bills. There are also costs associated with their donation which are not reimbursable by Medicare: for example, travel, lodging, meals and child care. I firmly believe that Congress should take a more proactive role in promoting living organ donation by addressing these financial disincentives.

According to a study by researchers at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 24 percent of family members indicated that financial issues kept them from being living organ donors. Four donors in their study alone lost their jobs when they revealed to their employers their plans to be living related donors and the need to have recovery time after surgery.

We need a concerted and well-established policy on living organ donation in this country. We should not only seek to provide the best quality-of-life for our constituents, but also do so in a fiscally responsible manner. By removing some of the financial disincentives associated with living organ donation, Congress can ensure better graft survival rates, increase the number of organs available for transplantation, and reduce the costs associated with dialysis and repeat transplantation.

That is why today I am introducing the Living Organ Donation Incentives Act of 1999. This legislation would amend the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to allow living organ donation to qualify as a reason for taking time off work. This would include time spent for tests, evaluations, travel time and recuperation. The FMLA currently covers employers in the private sector with 50 or more employees and most public employees at the federal, state and local level. Under FMLA, employers are required to grant 12 weeks unpaid leave in any one calendar year to parents to care for their newborn or newly adopted child or a seriously ill child, spouse, or parent and to temporarily disabled workers. This provision would specify that living organ donation would qualify as a reason to take leave. In addition, by singling out living organ donation as a qualifier for FMLA, Congress can bring much needed attention to the benefits of this type of donation.

In addition, this legislation would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop a grant program to aid individuals with the high costs associated with living organ donation. Medicare currently pays for the costs associated with a number of solid organ transplants. However, Medicare does not cover the costs of travel, lodging, child care, etc. These costs can be an extremely difficult burden for many potential donors. By developing a grant program for eligible beneficiaries, Congress could help increase the number of living organ donations.

This legislation would also increase the payment amount (referred to as the 'composite rate') by 2.9 percent for renal dialysis services under Medicare. The current rate has remained essentially unchanged since 1983, and the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission recently expressed concern that quality of dialysis services may decline if the rate is not increased. In recent years, costs have risen in relation to the composite rate. In fact, the independent and nonpartisan Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) recently expressed concern that without an increase in the payment the quality of dialysis services may decline.

This legislation is supported by the National Kidney Foundation, American Society of Transplantation, National Renal Administrators Association, American Society of Transplant Surgeons, American Society of Nephrology, American Neprhology Nurses Association, North American Transplant Coordinators Organization, Patient Access To Transplantation Coalition, Renal Physicians Associations.

I would also like to thank and express my appreciation for the ideas and suggestions I received from these organizations. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Troy Zimmerman and Dolph Chianchiano with the National Kidney Foundation, Gwen Gampel with the National Renal Administrators Association, and Kathy Lanza Turrisi, Program Director of the Medical University of South Carolina. Together, we have crafted legislation that will tear down the disincentives associated with living organ donation.

Mr. Speaker, in the world of organ donation, supply simply does not meet demand. Together, we need to develop strategies for greater organ donation. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important and urgent legislation.

RECOGNIZING FLAT STANLEY

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Flat Stanley who showed up today in my office here in Washington, D.C. Mr. Stanley was introduced to me by Jessika Fretwell, a Student from Laurel Elementary School in Ft. Collins, Colorado.

Together, Mr. Stanley and Miss Fretwell are trying to see how far and wide Flat Stanley can travel in a short period of time. This experiment, I understand, is being conducted as part of a classroom activity in Miss Cooper's Class.

I hereby certify, Mr. Speaker, that Flat Stanley arrived in Washington, D.C. today. Should any of our colleagues wish to meet him, they may inquire about his status at my office. There, Mr. Stanley will be resting for most of Wednesday.