

outstanding educator. Benedictine will celebrate his retirement at a dinner on June 5, 1999. I wish Charles Reynolds and his family the very best.

TAIWAN EXTENDS A HELPING
HAND TO THE KOSOVAR REFUGEEES

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to honor President Lee Teng-hui of the Republic of China on Taiwan.

President Lee has announced that he will sponsor an aid package amounting to US\$300 million for the refugees in Kosovo. He should be highly commended for his leadership. President Lee's generosity should inspire other wealthy nations of the world to open their hearts and pockets to help the war-torn region.

Taiwan is a geographically small nation, yet its government and people have large, unselfish hearts. They recognize the need for generosity toward the Kosovars, and they are always more than willing to help the less fortunate throughout the world.

President Lee's offer of financial assistance to Kosovo is very generous, and Taiwan should be recognized by the United States and the entire world for this selfless, charitable action.

A FITTING HONOR FOR SHEILA
DECTER

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on July 27 I will be here on the floor of the House. Ordinarily that would be a source of pride to me, because I very much enjoy serving in this institution and appreciate the privilege of doing so which I receive from my constituents. But on July 27, I will be here with some regret, because my presence in the House will mean that I will be absent from the event honoring Sheila Decter, Executive Director of the American Jewish Congress in Boston.

From my days in the Massachusetts Legislature in the 70s, through my current service in the House, I have relied on Sheila Decter's wisdom, knowledge, and commitment to fairness for all people in my effort to do my job. Sheila Decter is one of the great natural resources of Massachusetts, and no one better deserves the honor she will be receiving on July 27 than she.

In her work through the American Jewish Congress Sheila Decter exemplifies the notion set forward by the great Rabbi Hillel, because she shows that working to protect the rights of Jews in this country and elsewhere are not only compatible with a strong commitment to universal human rights, but in fact reinforces and strengthens that commitment. Sheila Decter exemplifies the point that fighting injustice against any one group is best done by

putting that in the context of the fight against injustice everywhere. She has enriched the life of our community, and she has made my job a lot easier. And while I know that our rules require us to address all remarks to the Speaker, I hope I will be permitted an exception so I can say: Mazel Tov, Sheila.

CELEBRATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY
OF LECLAIRE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the LeClaire Christian Church of Edwardsville, Illinois which is celebrating its 40th anniversary.

Throughout the years, the church has seen great change as it has moved from Odd Fellows' Hall to Garfield Street to its present location on Esic. The church has also seen their membership grow by four times throughout the years. Through this growth the church has expanded construction in order to provide greater facilities for congregation and community use.

The Anniversary Committee, chaired by Twila Ellsworth said the celebration has brought back former members as well as ministers from the past.

I am happy to see the steps the anniversary committee has made to celebrate their past as well as continuing their steps to offer quality programs and services to the community.

YUMA AGRICULTURE FORUM

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 10, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, this spring I held a widely-attended agriculture forum in Yuma, Colorado to hear from a panel of citizens representing Colorado's agriculture industry. Panelists shared their thoughts regarding the worsening agriculture economy in America and provided valuable suggestions for improving the industry's chances for success.

Record-low commodity prices, disease and weather-related problems, coupled with declining export opportunities and a weak demand, have taken a devastating toll on America's agriculture industry. Farm income has fallen dramatically over the past two years and it is difficult to predict how soon it might rebound. While Congress recently helped stave off disaster in rural America with an emergency assistance package, it is quite evident serious long-term policy decisions must be implemented to ensure the lasting future of rural agriculture.

Upon returning to Washington, D.C. from Yuma, I shared this report with House Agriculture Committee Chairman LARRY COMBEST, my colleagues on the House Agriculture Committee and other key Members of Congress in order to provide them with the valuable information and suggestions I received from my constituents. This information has already

proven quite helpful in prioritizing the agricultural policy agenda for the 106th Congress and I have been asked to distribute it to all Members.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hereby submit for the RECORD, the summarized comments and suggestions of Colorado's agriculture community.

DAVE FRANK, OWNER, MAINSTREET INSURANCE

When Mainstreet Insurance first began issuing multi-peril insurance policies to producers, the 1985 farm program was in effect which mandated participating farmers own crop insurance to cover potential nominal and catastrophic losses. This policy of mandatory coverage was reinforced under the Freedom to Farm Act of 1995, which imposed additional restrictions and sanctions upon uninsured producers. This is good for agriculture, because it encourages sound risk management practices among producers and can help prevent the need for frequent taxpayer-funded government bailouts.

However, following a year of historically low commodity prices, natural disasters, and lost export opportunities due to a worsening economic crisis in Asia and eroding markets in Europe and Latin America, Congress in late 1998 found it necessary to provide nearly \$6 billion in farm disaster and market loss assistance for American producers. Rather than provide higher relief payments to those producers who purchased crop insurance than to those who did not, Secretary Glickman provided the same level of relief to all qualifying producers. There is little incentive for some to invest in crop insurance if it is determined the government will step in and provide the same level of "emergency" assistance to all producers, regardless of coverage.

There are a number of ways to improve our current federal crop insurance program. First of all, the federal government should refrain from providing emergency or disaster relief to producers who signed non-insured waivers giving up their rights to any disaster payments. Much as an uninsured store-owner would not expect the government to take responsibility for his or her losses in the event of a fire, an equally uninsured farmer should not expect the government to cover losses stemming from another unforeseen disaster.

Secondly, the government should encourage higher levels of crop insurance coverage among producers. Currently, the Risk Management Agency (RMA) subsidizes the 50%, 55%, and 65% coverage level premiums at 32% of cost, while only subsidizing the 70% and 75% levels at 18% of cost. It is difficult to encourage farmers to move from the 65% to 70% coverage level if their indemnity will only increase a few dollars while their premiums almost double. Instead, the RMA should invert the subsidy schedule to encourage higher level of coverage. Many U.S. counties are now testing coverage plans up to 80% and 85%. The RMA should consider testing plans up to 90%, 95%, or even 100% of farmers' Actual Production History (APH).

The RMA also must become more customer service-oriented and more attentive to the changing needs of producers operating under a new, market-drive agriculture program. Crop production and crop practices have changed rapidly and dramatically since the 1995 Farm Bill. Many farmers are changing their rotations and planting different crops, while others are planting continuous crops. There are a number of clients who live in one county, yet their land extends over into the next county. In many cases, the RMA allows a crop to be insured in one but not the other. The land is the same, the crop is the same, and the farmer is the same, yet only part of the crop is allowed to be covered by crop insurance. Discrepancies such as these discourage sound management practices at the very