

COMMUNITIES CAN NATIONAL
AWARD

□ 2045

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to announce that Goldsboro, located in the First Congressional District of North Carolina, was named 1 of 5 communities chosen from a national search to be awarded the Community of Excellence Award by Communities Can, a national coalition of communities.

Communities Can is a growing national network of communities dedicated to serving all children and their families, including those who are at risk or with special needs. Goldsboro has demonstrated many abilities in an effort to foster collaboration and cooperation among the many public and private programs that can serve and support young children and families. They have shown diligence and a serious level of involvement with designing and implementing programs that have proven beneficial to families.

Over the years this community has demonstrated an inclusive approach to serving children with special needs and an innovative spirit in utilizing the complex public program to meet the specific needs of their families.

For all of these reasons Goldsboro, North Carolina was chosen from among 48 nominees by members of the Communities Can Team at the Georgetown University Child Development Center for Child Health and Mental Health Policy.

There are several key aspects to the kind of quality, service, and support for young children and families in this community essential to making things work. For instance, in Goldsboro there is one pediatric practice that provides a true medical home for almost every child in the county. They attend to children with or without insurance, although a generous SCHIP program in North Carolina has made arrangements so that very few children in the community are without coverage.

Further, Wayne Action Group of Economic Solvency, which is the community action group and Head Start grantee in town, serves as an umbrella for a good number of family and child service efforts.

In addition, a local hospital foundation funds a person who is responsible for community organization/grant writing to assist with the implementation of ideas from the community planning efforts.

Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of comprehensive collaboration of efforts that completes a full circle enabling children and families to effectively identify and remedy the many problems that exist and need to be addressed. I am privileged and proud to represent a community with such dedication to its children and families.

Congratulations to Goldsboro, North Carolina. I wish them much future success.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HAYES). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Chairman, 1999 has been designated the International Year of Older Persons. The year marks a time to reflect upon the contributions of our seniors and assess our efforts to secure their continued health and well-being. During this year, we honor those who contribute to our communities as grandparents, parents, workers, volunteers, and as role models. They are the keepers of our traditions and the teachers of our values. While honoring these heroes this year, we must also work to support them where help is needed. This means looking to the future and ensuring the strength of our programs that serve our elders.

The next century is anticipated to be a golden age for seniors, with life expectancy increasing and predictions that older persons will outnumber children for the first time in our history. America's seniors are more physically and mentally fit than ever before. Yet with these positive changes, we can anticipate a greater burden for our health care system.

One way of preparing for the future is to renew the Older Americans Act, which has not been reauthorized since 1995. Since that time, our Nation's seniors and the programs established to serve them have faced an uncertain future. Because these programs help our seniors to remain active, healthy and part of their communities, I have asked the House leadership to make it a priority for passage this year.

The Older Americans Act has been a special program for over 34 years. Using a small slice of the Federal budget, the Older Americans Act has provided hot meals, legal assistance, employment for seniors and services for the home-bound. I have seen firsthand how these programs assist and benefit seniors in my home State of Kansas.

Kansas seniors have given a lifetime of service. Renewing these programs that preserve their well-being allows us to give back a little to those who have made our country what it is today.

We take pride in celebrating older Americans who demonstrate new horizons for what is thought impossible for older persons. Both Bob Dole and John Glenn are these types of heroes who continue to defy limitations and inspire others to play leading roles in their communities. However, there are other, lesser-known older Americans who have been important to their own communities and now make use of the services of the Older Americans Act. The least we can do is to assist those who have given all they can and want to continue to live healthy and active lives.

Long life is a gift we treasure, and along with this gift comes a responsi-

bility. Renewing the Older Americans Act is responsible action that provides security for the next century and will foster longer, healthier, and more productive lives for all Americans.

AMERICAN AGRICULTURE IS IN
CRISIS AND NEEDS HELP NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, this past week it was announced that North Carolina farmers' earnings had dropped by \$1 billion in 1998 over 1997. I was astounded when I read the article. But similar problems are being experienced all over America by our farmers. The farm crisis in America should be a concern for every American.

I have said many times that the people in this country must realize that food does not just come from the grocery store or from the supermarket. It comes from the blood, sweat, and tears and hard work of some of the hardest-working, God-fearing people in this country, and their families work hard. We cannot stand by and allow the farmers of this country to go out of business and let our farms be turned into strip malls and parking lots.

Whether it is the wheat farmer in the Midwest, the cotton farmer in Texas, the vegetable farmer in Florida, or the tobacco farmer in North Carolina, farmers help build this country, and they deserve to have us stand by them in times of crisis. If we do not, we will pay the price through the devastation of our rural communities and higher prices at the grocery store ultimately.

I am committed to working with Congress to find solutions that will restore profitability to agriculture in America and allow mothers and fathers to pass on this honored professional farming to their sons and daughters, because a lot of young people in this country are getting out of the profession because they cannot make a living. We must restore the farm safety net in this Nation before more farmers and their families fall through the cracks.

Mr. Speaker, the bumper crop of wheat last year and again this year that is now being harvested and is being seen in many parts of the country are suffering from some of the lowest prices in recent years. Farmers are finding out that they cannot produce themselves into prosperity with the low prices we are having. In some parts of the country, some farmers are already reeling from drought. This Congress must do something before it is too late for our farmers and their families.

We must start by reforming crop insurance, breaking down trade barriers, providing greater access to low-interest loans and credit for new and struggling producers, and provide support to farmers in times of dramatically low commodity prices like we are seeing