

HONORING BILL BURKE FOR HIS
ROLE AS CHAIRMAN OF THE SAN
DIEGO CHAPTER OF THE AGC

HON. BRIAN P. BILBRAY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. BILBRAY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to honor and congratulate Bill Burke for the leadership and direction he has provided to the San Diego Chapter of the Associated General Contractors (AGC) over the last 23 years. As Chairman of AGC, his countless hours of persistent hard work have led to some great strides and advancements for general contractors in San Diego.

During Bill's tenure he provided fundamental leadership that expanded the tasks of the San Diego AGC by moving them into a multi-dimensional organization that not only strives to accomplish the goals and achievements of the construction industry, but also provides apprenticeships, safety, and benefit programs. He has demonstrated great flexibility and creativity over the last two decades to keep ahead of the changing role of general contractors and the construction industry in San Diego County.

At the end of this year Bill Burke will be retiring from his leadership position. He will remain a constant standard and hard act to follow for all future AGC Chairmen, his impact on the construction industry in San Diego county will be felt for many future generations. I thank him for all his efforts and congratulate him on his retirement and wish him the best of luck in all future endeavors.

WHAT ARE THE PRIORITIES OF
CONGRESS?

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, what are the priorities of this Congress? Today, the House voted on the Defense Appropriations Conference Report, the final vote to determine funding for the Department of Defense. The Defense Appropriations, Military Construction, and Energy and Water Appropriations bills together have provided \$289 billion in defense funds, which is \$8 billion more than was requested by the Administration. In addition, the Defense Appropriations Conference Report allocates \$1 billion for the procurement of "test" F-22 fighters and an additional \$275 million has been provided for the purchase of five unrequested F-15 jets. Extra funding, well beyond what is needed to maintain a strong defense, is being allocated to the Defense Department at the same time as programs that help the neediest Americans are being severely cut. Millions of children across the country are without health care, programs to help improve our children's education are being cut, and millions of people are living in poverty at a time when affordable housing is consistently decreasing. This Congress must better prioritize in order to provide for the needs of Americans.

Currently, 11 million children in the United States go without health insurance and

150,000 of them are in my home state of Colorado. Eight million children without health insurance could be insured using the excess \$8 billion in defense funding.

Several "test" F-22 fighters will be purchased by the United States at a cost of \$300 million per plane. Every uninsured child in Colorado who suffers because he or she cannot receive health care could be covered at half the price of a single F-22 fighter. Instead, the fighter jets will be produced while children in every state across America suffer due to a lack of needed health coverage.

Education is another area where deep funding cuts will harm our nation's children. Approximately \$3 billion has been targeted for cuts from the education budget for fiscal year 2000. These cuts damage education programs intended to assist over two million children. This proposal would cut programs that provide needed after school care, reading and math help for low-income children, and technology support for schools. Under current proposals, states would not receive grants to assist in School-to-Work programs and funding would be denied for drug and violence coordinators in middle schools across the country. The cost of a single F-22 fighter would provide approximately 750,000 low-income and needy children with lunches at school for a year through the National School Lunch program. In addition, about 675,000 needy students could be provided with school lunches at the cost of the five unrequested F-15 fighters provided for in the Defense Appropriations Conference Report. Instead, 2.9 billion dollars' worth of education programs are in danger of being underfunded.

Finally, even in today's booming economy, millions of Americans suffer from homelessness and poverty. According to a Congressional Research Service report by Morton J. Schusseim, "Housing the Poor: Federal Housing Program for Low-Income Families," on any given night, 600,000 people sleep on the streets because they have no home. In addition, 12.5 million people are classified by the government as having severe housing problems such as substandard and crowded living conditions. In recent years, there has been a 15.8 percent increase in the number of very-low-income households in the United States and the number of affordable housing units has decreased by 42 percent between 1974 and 1995. Severe physical deficiencies such as bad wiring, broken heating and dilapidated structures affect 3.1 million families that rent homes.

So, what are the priorities of this Congress? The answer lies in its actions. When defense is provided with billions of dollars more than what was requested, when too many kids remain uninsured, and when education initiatives and affordable housing programs are in danger of being cut by millions, it becomes crystal clear that the priorities of this Congress are grossly out of sync with those of the American people.

FOCUSING ON ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN THE NEW BRAUNFELS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the education efforts of the New Braunfels Independent School District in collaboration with the Center for Leadership in Science, Mathematics and Technology at the Alamo Community College District. These two educational districts have joined to host a meeting entitled "The Community Focuses on Academic Excellence," scheduled for October 19, 1999, in New Braunfels, TX. The meeting will address the need for more students to engage in hands-on science exploration in grades K-12.

The New Braunfels Independent School District has demonstrated an exceptional dedication to expand the educational horizons of its students, particularly in science. Together, the New Braunfels Independent School District and Alamo Community College District have invited a keynote speaker, Dr. Lawrence Lowery from the Lawrence Hall of Science at U.C. Berkeley, to discuss the topic "How Students Learn." The United States Marine Corps will be on hand to present \$10,000 for an Annenberg Satellite Dish for use in all schools in New Braunfels. The commitment of the school districts, the support of the parents, and the generosity of the community will help expand the horizons of our children.

Science is key to understanding the world we live in. It is important for our students to have the type of hands-on education in science that is both challenging and rewarding. Without exposure to the sciences early on, our students will be left behind on the road of educational advancement. We have seen time and again that a commitment to higher standards of education is a commitment to excellence and a commitment to our future.

I would like to commend the New Braunfels Independent School District for its focus on its students. The efforts of teachers, parents, and a community of supporters will help us reach our common goal, academic excellence and a love of learning.

WILT CHAMBERLAIN'S
PENNSYLVANIA LEGACY

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 13, 1999

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the greatest basketball players, and one of the most magnificent Pennsylvanians that ever lived. As the Representative from Hershey, Pennsylvania, I have a unique remembrance of Wilton Norman Chamberlain.

On the tragic occasion of his death we remember his awesome physical stature and stunning agility, his God given athletic prowess. Inevitably, we recall what is one of the greatest feats in all of sport: Wilt Chamberlain's 100 point game. Chamberlain's 100 point game, a record that will surely stand through the next millennium, took place on March 2, 1962, in Hershey, Pennsylvania.