

working together to achieve a common goal—as evidenced by their win in Louisville. As only the second Connecticut locality ever to win the award, the delegation and residents of the Naugatuck Valley have demonstrated to the state of Connecticut and, indeed, the rest of the United States, that a dream of excellence can be achieved through hard work and dedication.

The residents and delegates from the seven towns of the lower Naugatuck Valley should rightly feel immense satisfaction at this most significant accomplishment. As one of only ten regions or cities in the country to win the All-American City award this year, they have become part of an elite group of citizens whose concern for—and pride in—their community has enabled great deeds to be accomplished.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and the rest of my colleagues join me in offering our sincere congratulations to the residents of the “Mighty” Naugatuck Valley of Connecticut for a job well done, and for setting an example for communities around our nation to follow.

#### RECENT ACTION ON “GOLDEN RICE” OFFERS GREAT PROMISE

### HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 20, 2000*

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the following editorial from the August 18, 2000, Omaha World-Herald. The editorial expresses support for recent actions which will make the newly developed “golden rice” more widely available worldwide. This rice, which has been generally engineered to contain more beta carotene, holds the potential to dramatically improve lives by helping to combat malnutrition and blindness among Vitamin A-deficient children throughout the world.

#### A LAUDABLE GIFT OF LIFE AND SIGHT

A lot of people, especially outside the United States, aren't buying genetically modified crops. All right then: What if somebody gave them away?

Well, somebody has—“somebody” being Monsanto Co.

It was a development so stunning that probably no novelist would ever incorporate it in a plot—too far-fetched. But Monsanto announced that it would be granting royalty-free licenses worldwide via the Internet for its newly developed “golden rice.” It has been modified so that it's enriched in beta carotene, which the body converts to Vitamin A. (Licenses for other modified rices will similarly be cost-free, but golden rice is by far the star of the show.)

If this offer is widely taken up, the effect is likely to be dramatic. Worldwide, more than a million Vitamin-A deficient children die every year: 300,000 or so go blind.

We'd like to think Monsanto's generosity might inspire imitators among other holders of patents on such superfoods. First of all, there's the obvious prospect of making a better life for a lot of children in the Third World. Additionally, modified crops are getting a bum rap as being unsafe or unhealthy—“ Frankenfoods,” in the unfortunate popular jargon. Maybe moves like Monsanto's will help dispel such thinking.

That latter point is, in fact, Monsanto's stated purpose. The argument can therefore be made that the chemical and agricultural

giant is merely acting in its own long-term self-interest.

Nothing wrong with that. If this act and perhaps others like it can break that logjam of opinion, the company or companies that help bring it about deserve to benefit. But in the here and now, it was an impressive example of a giant company being a good corporate citizen of the world. The folks at Monsanto who made the decision have a right to be proud.

#### HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES WEEK

SPEECH OF

### HON. ALLEN BOYD

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 19, 2000*

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, education has always been a key to opportunity in America. Historically Black Colleges and Universities [HBCUs] were created as early as 1837 to provide African-Americans access to higher education. America's HBCUs have provided a crucial avenue to educational and economic advancement for African-American youth for more than 150 years.

The best opportunities for personal and professional success will go to those who are well educated. Our Nation's HBCUs have assisted African-American and other students in achieving their educational goals and reaching their full potential, while keeping tuition costs affordable. The vast majority of African-Americans with bachelor's degrees in engineering, computer science, life science, business, and mathematics have graduated from one of the 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. These graduates, numbering 300,000 African-Americans, make up the majority of our Nation's African-American military officers, physicians, Federal judges, elected officials, and business executives. The distinguished faculty members at HBCUs serve as role models and mentors, challenging students to reach their full potential.

I am proud to have one of these universities in the congressional district that I represent. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, founded on October 3, 1887, in Tallahassee, Florida, as the State Normal College for Colored Students, began classes with 15 students and 2 instructors. Since then, it has become an institution of higher learning, striving toward even greater heights of academic excellence. Today, Florida A&M University is one of nine 4-year, public, co-educational and fully accredited institutions of higher learning in Florida's State University System, and excellence remains its goal.

For more than 100 years, Florida A&M University has served the citizens of the State of Florida and the Nation through its provision of preeminent educational programs. By serving the African-American community, HBCUs, like FAMU, serve all Americans. These institutions embody many of our most deeply cherished values—equality, diversity, opportunity, and hard work. FAMU is a source of great pride and a symbol of economic, social, and political growth in the community and the Nation. Preparing talented young men and women to succeed in every sector of our economy, FAMU, “Florida's Opportunity University,” is committed to meeting the challenges and needs of future generations.

As education and diversity become increasingly important in the 21st century, graduates of HBCUs will continue to be at the vanguard of America's progress. I would like to commend Florida A&M University for its commitment to educational opportunity, outstanding performance, and invaluable contributions to the people of Florida.

#### DIGNITY FOR THE TERMINALLY ILL ACT OF 2000

### HON. MATT SALMON

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 20, 2000*

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Dignity for the Terminally Ill Act of 2000. The bill clarifies an ambiguity in Federal law which allows the Health Care Financing Administration [HCFA] to cut off Medicare funding to hospice patients after 6 months of treatment. The scope of this problem was detailed in a recent Wall Street Journal report which revealed that in early February 1997, several Hospice patients received letters from HCFA saying they were under investigation for Medicare fraud simply because they had lived longer than current Federal guidelines allow for reimbursement. In other words, HCFA officials were more concerned about being reimbursed than they were about caring for these dying patients.

It seems strange that HCFA would begin cracking down on its 6-month rule given the fact that, for years, Medicare officials have encouraged the hospice industry to grow, primarily because it is less costly to care for the terminally ill at home than it is to treat these patients in a nursing home or hospital.

Unfortunately, it seems the rise in hospice care during the 1990s brought about an increase in fraud and abuse of the Medicare system, which in turn sparked a misguided crackdown on terminally ill patients.

HCFA officials discovered roughly \$83 million in such abuse and began pushing their intermediaries to crack down on the problem. In 1997, the Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services warned HCFA officials to do a better job enforcing their 6-month reimbursement guideline. While HCFA's plans may have been well-intentioned, its intermediaries' attempt to enforce the rule was disastrous. For example, the Wall Street Journal reported that UGS, a subsidiary of Blue Cross Blue Shield in Wisconsin and a Medicare intermediary, sent letters to five terminally ill patients which declared that they were not eligible for Medicare hospice and, adding insult to injury, requested these patients to pay \$450,000 for the care they received.

Outrage from several hospices and Federal legislators has led to a small change in HCFA's aggressive crackdown on its 6-month rule. Last week, HCFA's administrator, Nancy Ann Min DeParle, wrote to thousands of hospices to explain that there has been a “disturbing misperception” about HCFA's efforts to enforce its 6-month regulation. However, she never specifically declared that reimbursement for care of hospice patients will continue for as long as they receive treatment. She only offered to create a “voluntary” case-by-case review of patients who remain in hospice care longer than 6 months.