

exist between states and improving the newborn screening system. The Hereditary Disorders Newborn Screening Act of 2000 will establish a grant program for the states to be administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration to achieve this and other important related goals in an effort to strengthen our nation's newborn screening system.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in eliminating these testing disparities and the preventable tragedies they produce by cosponsoring the Hereditary Disorders Newborn Screening Act of 2000.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE YOUNGER AMERICANS ACT

### HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 21, 2000*

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to introduce, along with my colleagues Mrs. ROUKEMA, Mr. FROST, and Mr. GILMAN, the Younger Americans Act. This is landmark legislation that will dramatically increase after-school opportunities for young children and teenagers by providing them with adult mentors, education, sports, and volunteer activities.

As any parent or teacher knows, the best way to keep kids out of trouble and help them learn and grow is to keep them busy and give them opportunity. Today's bill is an historic opportunity to dramatically expand safe and exciting programs for children and youth after school, a time when too many kids suffer from a lack of activity and adult supervision. A recent Urban institute study found that one in five young people age 6–12 are left without adult supervision after school and before their parents come home from work, a critical period during the day to keep youth both positively engaged and out of trouble.

Thirty-five years ago, Congress made a decision to help seniors and passed the Older Americans Act. In doing so, Congress launched a series of highly effective local efforts that have improved and enriched the lives of our nation's elderly. It helped pay for senior centers, Meals on Wheels, and community service programs like Green Thumb.

For too long, however, Congress has ignored the needs of our nation's young people. It has failed to make the issues of young people a priority and has failed to make an adequate investment in their development and well-being.

Our new bill attempts to correct that oversight. Today, we seek to repeat the success of the Older Americans Act by funding a national network of high-quality programs tailored to the particular challenges faced by youth today.

Too often, we find that public programs for young people focus on the problems of youth and promote piecemeal policies that seek to redress negative behaviors like juvenile delinquency or teen pregnancy.

But the evidence shows that the most promising approaches are those that foster positive youth development, build social and emotional competence, and link young people with adult mentors. This is the future of youth social programs in the 21st century and it is an approach we seek to advance through this legislation.

The Younger Americans Act will help coordinate and fund youth-mentoring, community service through volunteerism, structured academic and recreational opportunities, and other activities aimed at fostering the positive educational and social development of teens and pre-teens.

Under the bill, the federal government would distribute funds by formula to community boards that would oversee the planning, operation, and evaluation of local programs. Funding for local programs in the initial year would be \$500 million, and would rise to \$2 billion in 2005, in addition to matching funds provided by local and state governments and the private sector.

To qualify, each local program would be required to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated system of youth programs with the following five general components: ongoing relationships with caring adults; safe places with structured activities; access to services that promote healthy lifestyles, including those designed to improve physical and mental health; opportunities to acquire marketable skills and competencies; and, opportunities for community service and civic participation.

Thirty percent of funds would be targeted to youth programs that address specific, urgent areas of need such as youth in correctional facilities and situations where youth are at high risk due to neglect or abuse.

The bill has a vast national coalition of supporters including former Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Colin Powell, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, the National Urban League, America's Promise, the Child Welfare Leagues of America, United Way, the National Mental Health Association, and others.

I want to thank all of members of the coalition behind this bill for bringing us together. I applaud their work on this legislation and the work that they do every day in each of our local communities.

I want to express special appreciation to all of the young people from these associations, who have rightly played such a key role in drafting and advocating for this legislation.

Congress has enacted many worthwhile programs to help young people. But the bill we are introducing today has a different message. Our bill responds to the tremendous desire of young people to have the greatest opportunity possible to be active, creative, and productive citizens in our society, rather than receiving society's help only after they are in trouble. Kids are asking to be given a chance to make a difference in their own lives. We are saying today that that is exactly what Congress can and should do.

I am confident we can make that happen. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation.

#### HONORING THE 352ND FIGHTER GROUP, THE BLUE NOSED BASTARDS OF BOSNEY

### HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 21, 2000*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a special group of World War II veterans.

The 352nd fighter group, known as the Blue Nosed Bastards of Bosney, was named for the

farm land where they were based and the bright blue paint on the cowling of each of their P-51 Mustangs. The primary purpose of the fighter group was to escort bombers across the English Channel to France and Germany (and eventually Berlin) where they bombed the Germans relentlessly. Once the bombers had completed their missions and returned to base, the 352nd would attack various military targets before returning home. The fighter group also participated in D-Day by neutralizing the German Air Force before the invasion and then providing cover for the Allies during the invasion.

Since the end of World War II, the brave men of the 352nd fighter group have reunited every year somewhere in the United States. This year will be their 50th reunion which is being held in Richmond, Virginia. It will also be their last reunion. This historic reunion was brought to my attention by Howard Polin, a corporal in the Army Aircorp, who served on the ground crew with the 352nd fighter group in England from December 7, 1942 until February 4, 1946.

I want to take this opportunity to salute the men of the 352nd fighter group. They, along with the millions of young men and women who served our country in uniform during World War II, served side by side to restore the peace and the freedom to those overwhelmed by tyranny.

Americans of all religions, of all races, and of diverse political philosophies, came together on the battlefield and on the homefront, helping to extinguish the flames of oppression and the evil that infected mankind throughout the world. America provided a beacon of hope in a dark sea of despair.

We must never forget those brave men and women who served in the war that changed our future. Since they have returned home, they have faithfully served this country with dignity and with strengthened character. They have all helped to create the single greatest country on the face of the earth and have altered, for the better, the future of mankind, both at home and abroad.

America can never fully repay her veterans. However, we can honor these courageous individuals by treasuring the freedom they preserved.

Mr. Speaker, the men of the 352nd fighter group all answered the call to duty when their country needed them. They are true American heroes.

#### CONGRATULATING PORTER-STARKE SERVICES

### HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 21, 2000*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to congratulate Porter-Stärke Services, located in Porter County, Indiana, as it celebrates its 25th anniversary this Friday, September 22, 2000. Porter-Stärke Services will commemorate its 25 years of dedicated service to the community of Northwest Indiana in a gala celebration entitled "A Silver Lining," to be held at the Porter County Expo Center in Valparaiso, Indiana. The celebration will serve as an opportunity for Porter-Stärke to reaffirm its commitment to excellence in mental health services for individuals in