

HONORING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE POLISH AMERICAN RADIO PROGRAM OF PHILADELPHIA

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize an important milestone honoring a valuable service to the Polish American community in Philadelphia, PA and its surrounding region. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Polish American Radio Program of the Philadelphia area. This radio broadcast has served as an invaluable communication tool for the Polish American community. It serves as an important medium in which to share common views and ethnic pride.

The first broadcast took place in April 1925 on Broad Street in Philadelphia on 860 AM Radio. Since that time there have been many daily and weekly hosts of the program who offered various types of entertainment to Polonia. Many in Philadelphia remember the long time daily radio program host Theodore Przybyla, who passed away in 1982 at the time martial law was imposed in Poland and the Solidarity Union was crushed.

Following Mr. Przybyla's death, Michael Blichasz and Barbara Ilnicka worked tirelessly with radio management at WTEL 860 AM Radio to maintain the daily radio program. They gathered the support and hard work of the Polish religious community, the Polish American organizations, fraternal organizations, veterans groups, local businesses and individual supporters who recognized the valuable service provided to the Polish American community. After 72 years of programming at WTEL 860 AM, a programming change shifted broadcast of the Polish American Radio program to its current home on station WNWR 1540 AM, where it proudly serves as the only Polish American broadcast program heard 7 days a week.

The program can also be heard live over the Internet during regular broadcast times at www.WNWR.COM.

Sustaining a radio program for 75 years is a wonderful achievement marked by strong dedication to purpose. Longtime hosts Michael Blichasz and Barbara Ilnicka, are to be commended for their expertise in hosting a radio program that fulfills its mission to inform, unite, entertain and present news and information about activities taking place in the Polish American community and in Poland.

Mr. Speaker, as a Polish American, I too have felt personal pride in the struggles of Poles who have fought oppression and witnessed democracy return to their native land. For the thousands of Polish Americans who live in Philadelphia, this Polish American broadcast has been a wonderful resource to follow developments in the homeland and share in the ethnic pride of strong people who fought communism and won.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize the Polish American Radio Program of Philadelphia for its 75 years of outstanding service to the community.

LEGISLATION REGARDING THE DIRECTOR OF THE INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce legislation today with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) and the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) to elevate the position of Director of the Indian Health Service to Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services. Companion legislation is also being introduced today in the other body by the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN).

The Indian Health Service (IHS) is the lead agency in providing health care to the more than 550 Indian tribes in the United States. Services ranging from facility construction to pediatrics assist approximately 1.3 million American Indians and Alaska Natives each year. The IHS currently falls under the authority of the Public Health Service within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The IHS Director is the top administration official charged with carrying out the federal trust responsibility for IHS, but he does not report to the HHS Secretary.

Designating the IHS Director as an Assistant Secretary of Indian Health would afford IHS a stronger advocacy function within HHS, and allow for increased representation during the budget process. Currently the ability of the IHS to affect budgetary policy is limited, in part by the Director's inability to directly participate in budget negotiations. It is also important to note that an Assistant Secretary leads the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) although the IHS budget exceeds that of BIA.

This legislation has the strong support of the American Indian and Alaska Native community. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DENVER, OUTGOING PRESIDENT, PERRIS VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication to the community and to the overall well-being of the City of Perris is exceptional. The City of Perris has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated business and community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give time and talent to make their communities a better place to live and work. John Denver is one of these individuals.

On January 26, 2001, John Denver was honored as the outgoing 1999–2000 President of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce. Most significantly, John's leadership over the past two years as President of the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce led to tremendous strides in reunifying the Chamber. Additionally, Mr. Denver put enumerable hours into the Perris community's re-development, Student of the Month and Wake Up Perris programs.

John Denver's dedication to promoting the businesses, schools and community organizations of the Perris Valley make me proud to call him a community member and fellow American. I know that all of Perris Valley are grateful for his contribution to the betterment of the community and salute him as he departs the Perris Valley Chamber of Commerce after two years of service. I look forward to continuing to work with him for the good of our community in the future.

REVIEW BY CONGRESS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF COURT FACILITIES, H.R. 254

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to provide for the review by Congress of proposed construction of court facilities.

I am introducing this measure in response to my frustrating experience with a proposed Federal courthouse project for Orange County, New York.

In April of this year, the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit voted to rescind its prior 1992 approval for construction of a Federal courthouse in Orange County, New York.

This project began in 1991, when then chief judge of the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York, the Honorable Charles L. Brient, requested the Board of Judges to study future planning for court facilities west of the Hudson River. Subsequently, in June 1992, the Board of Judges of the Southern District found that there was a need for a courthouse to meet the growing demands in the mid-Hudson valley region of New York, and voted unanimously to authorize the chief judge to apply to the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit for approval of a Federal district courthouse west of the Hudson.

Following approval of the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit on July 28, 1992, the matter was referred to the Court Administration and Case Management Committee of the Judicial Conference of the United States. The committee reported favorably and voted unanimously in a March 1993 session of the Judicial Conference of the United States to "seek legislation on the court's behalf to amend title 28 of the U.S. Code, section 112(B) to establish a place for holding court in the Middletown/Walkkill Area of Orange County or such nearby location as may be deemed appropriate."

Accordingly, during the 104th Congress, Public Law 104–317 was approved designating that "Court for the Southern District shall be held at New York, White Plains, and in Middletown-Walkkill area of Orange County or such nearby location as may be appropriate."

In an attempt to proceed forward in an expeditious manner the Administrative Office of the Courts and the U.S. General Services Administration, both concurring with the need for a courthouse in Orange County, determined that a facility could and should be constructed and paid through GSA's current funding.

This project had and still has clear evidence denoting the growth population and economic

activity in Dutchess, Orange, and Sullivan Counties in New York State, as well as steady increases in caseload from the Mid-Hudson Valley Region. In fact, current statistics suggests that the need is even greater now than previously ascertained by Congress in 1996. The number of cases in 1999 that could have gone to an Orange County Courthouse, based on the location of the litigants or the attorney's residence, increased to 312, up from 290 in 1996. Moreover, the population for the region has increased to 671,767, up from 656,740 in 1996 and the total labor force has risen to 309,100, up from 301,800 in 1996.

Furthermore, it should be noted that while Congress may have acquiesced in the closure of some courthouses which have become redundant, based on considerations of economy and efficiency, I know of no situation where a court has refused to provide judicial services at a location designated by statute, where both the need exists and there is strong local support for the service. Such was and still is clearly the case with regard to the Orange County courthouse project.

Accordingly, while it is now current practice, as denoted by title 28 of the U.S. Code, for the U.S. Administrative Office of the Courts and the GSA to develop a rolling five year plan denoting the need for courthouse construction, I believe it is important for Congress to have a say in this important matter.

The legislation which I am introducing today will require the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts to submit for approval to the Congress a report setting forth the court's plans for proposed construction. Thereafter, Congress will have 30 legislative days to disapprove of the proposed construction.

It has become apparent to me after the experience I have had with both the Board of Judges of the Southern District and the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit that an imperialistic attitude among many of our Federal judges prevail.

The decision as to whether or not to move forward with construction of a court facility is no longer being based upon existing evidence and data attesting to need, but instead on the personal thoughts of the judges involved.

This legislation will end that practice by enabling Congress to properly assert its role in the construction of needed new courts.

Mr. Speaker, I submit a full copy of the text of H.R. 254 to be included at this point in the RECORD:

H.R. 254

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF NEW CONSTRUCTION FOR FEDERAL COURTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 462 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(g)(1) Facilities for holding court may not be constructed unless—

“(A) the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts submits to the Congress a report setting forth the plans for the proposed construction; and

“(B) 30 days have elapsed and the Congress has not, before the end of that 30-day period, enacted a provision of law stating in substance that the Congress disapproved the proposed construction.

“(2) For purposes of paragraph (1), construction of facilities includes the alter-

ation, improvement, remodeling, reconstruction, or enlargement of any building for purposes of holding court.

“(3) The 30-day period referred to in paragraph (1) shall be computed by excluding—

“(A) the days on which either House is not in session because of an adjournment of more than 3 days to a day certain or an adjournment of the Congress sine die; and

“(B) any Saturday and Sunday, not excluded under subparagraph (A), when either House is not in session.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 462 of title 28, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (b), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and subject to subsection (g)”;

(2) in subsection (c), by inserting before the period at the end the following: “, and subject to subsection (g)”;

(3) in subsection (f), by inserting “subject to subsection (g),” after “Director requests.”

SUPPORT FOR FAITH-BASED AND COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 30, 2001

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today I praise President George W. Bush's proposal to assist faith-based and community organizations as a promising way of encouraging them to help battle hunger, poverty, and other social ills. I was pleased to meet with the President today at the Fishing School as he announced the legislative initiative of his proposal.

Faith has been a defining characteristic of our communities' life throughout our nation's history, and people who serve God by serving those in need remain one of America's greatest strengths. This initiative will draw on these traditions and bring them to bear on some of our most difficult social problems. It also will leverage private funds and give a wider circle of donors a stake in the success of these projects.

I am particularly encouraged that this initiative will give some well-deserved support to the legions of people trying to end poverty in our prosperous nation, and I hope it will extend to those working in faith-based organizations that fight hunger. In recent years, growing numbers of hungry people have been turning to food pantries and soup kitchens for help each month. Nationwide, requests for help were up 18 percent nationwide, and three in five came from families with children. More than 70 percent of these pantries and kitchens are operated by faith-based organizations that work hard to collect donations—but have not been able to keep their shelves stocked. These are creative and resourceful projects whose dedicated employees and volunteers deserve support.

To those who worry that we are in uncharted territory, I would point out the work American charities do overseas, coping with this month's terrible earthquakes in India and El Salvador, easing famine in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, and promoting development around the world. Many of these organizations are closely affiliated with religious groups; many of their projects grew from missionary roots. This work leverages private funds and achieves results that often last generations.

To those who charge this initiative will open the door to taxpayer-funded religion, I would say that every faith tradition emphasizes helping the poor. The Bible, for example, contains some 2,500 verses about caring for those in need. The 'Golden Rule' is echoed in all religions' teachings, and is something virtually all can agree upon. This initiative's focus on results will ensure that Constitutional safeguards—both of religious freedom and for taxpayers—remain in place.

This is a common-sense approach that deals with the challenges many Americans face head on. It deserves a chance, and I commend President Bush for giving it one.

I also submit for the RECORD a piece that my good friend Jim Wallis recently wrote for the Washington Post. As editor of Sojourners magazine and convener of the Call to Renewal, he has been actively involved in having the faith community address problems like poverty and racism for decades.

[From the Washington Post, January 8, 2001]
A CHURCH-STATE PRIORITY

When the phone call came from Austin, I was surprised. Just two days after his election was secured, President-elect Bush wanted a meeting with religious leaders to discuss faith-based initiatives in solving poverty. He was reaching well beyond his base of conservative evangelicals; would I come and suggest others who should be invited?

The subject was already on my mind. The U.S. Conference of Mayors just had released its annual survey on hunger and homelessness in U.S. cities. In the past year, it showed, requests for emergency food increased by 17 percent. Two-thirds of the people requesting assistance were members of families, and 32 percent of the adults requesting food were employed.

Demand for emergency shelter increased 15 percent, and of those 36 percent were families with children. Thirteen percent of the requests for food and nearly one-quarter of the requests for housing went unmet because of lack of resources.

The leading causes of these increases? Low-paying jobs, lack of affordable housing, unemployment or other employment-related issues, and poverty or lack of income. Just before the holidays, Catholic Charities also released its annual report showing a “startling” 22 percent increase in the use of its emergency services of shelter, clothing, food and medicine.

The latest U.S. Census poverty statistics report that despite this time of record prosperity, one in every six American children is poor; one in three children of color. No other developed country has anything approaching U.S. child poverty rates.

So it seemed appropriate, just a few days before Christmas, to be in a Sunday school classroom in Austin's First Baptist Church with a diverse group of religious leaders, having a conversation with George W. Bush. The president-elect listened and asked questions for more than an hour, then stayed to mingle and talk to us individually. He believes in faith-based organizations and the important role they can play in solving social problems, and he wants to make support for such efforts an important part of his administration.

He asked us how to speak to the nation's soul. We suggested starting with our children, who embody our best hopes and reveal our worst failures as a society. I thanked him for being willing to include people in the meeting who hadn't supported his election and pledged to work with him if he chose to do something significant to reduce child poverty. We suggested that Bush use his inaugural address to call the nation to cut the