

States Naval Reserves, where he was able to further his education in engineering at numerous training schools. After serving his country with distinction, Stanley focused his energies and efforts on working for the Colorado State Highway Commission. Appointed by Governor Love in 1965, he later became Chairman of the Commission in 1973. During his career, he was a model of service, focusing his time and personal resources on the betterment of his state and community.

Stanley is a pillar of the Glenwood Springs community. His accomplished career addressing the transportation issues of the State of Colorado over the past 55 years has earned him the honor Citizen of the Year. Beyond his important work in the transportation sector, Stanley is also being honored for his great work on various local causes. Stanley has won numerous awards acknowledging his commitment to the community. In 1991, the Alumni Association of the University of Colorado at Boulder gave Stanley the "Alumni Recognition Award." In that same year, the Glenwood Springs Chamber Resort Association honored him with its first "Lifetime Achievement Award". For all these reasons, and many more, Stanley deserves the commendation of this body.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say thank you to Stanley for his dedication and service to his community over the years and congratulate him on an outstanding career and on this distinguished honor. He has worked hard for our community and for our great state. He is clearly deserving of the honor of being named Citizen of the Year.

Stanley, we are all very proud of you and grateful for your service.

IN HONOR OF VERA GILLIS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a woman from my home State of Ohio who in many ways exemplifies the qualities of our greatest citizens. On March 11, Vera Gillis will celebrate her 70th birthday. Throughout her life, Vera Gillis has served as an example of how hard work can touch the lives of others.

To say Vera Gillis is still going strong would be an understatement. This year, Vera will run her church's rummage sale and tutor numerous students from overseas. Vera Gillis also exemplifies compassion as she brings the Eucharist to those who aren't able to attend Mass every week. This year, she will welcome home her children who will come from as far away as Maine, Massachusetts, California, Florida, Washington, D.C. and Belgium to celebrate her birthday.

Throughout her life, Vera has consistently worked to make day-to-day life more meaningful and enriching by bringing people together with her overwhelming enthusiasm and wonderful sense of humor. She has served as the unofficial neighborhood ambassador since the early 1960s when her growing family moved to Westlake. Vera made sure everyone knew each other, even if it was just getting together at her house for an annual Christmas party. Now a grandmother of six, Vera has always

made her home a special place for children. Not only did she teach Spanish gratis to the students at Holy Trinity Elementary School, she also taught the neighborhood kids how to swim, go Christmas caroling and even put on musical shows.

She has been a steadfast and dear companion to her ever-growing circle of close friends. As an active member of Holy Trinity Church and its affiliated school in Avon, Ohio, Vera has contributed much more than even the 20 years of playground duty would indicate. Despite the many changes and the enormous growth in Westlake and Avon as suburbs, one of the constants has been the sense of community that results when people like Vera live there. Always quick to share a smile or kind words, Vera Gillis has helped to bring her community together.

One of Vera Gillis' most notable achievements has been her dedication to teaching English as a Second Language and American Citizenship classes. Her never-ending patience and enjoyment in bringing people from such diverse countries as Denmark, Poland, and Japan together is truly remarkable. Rather than just instructing people in the English language or American history, she shows people how to be neighbors, friends, and citizens. I would like to thank Vera for her commitment and service to the people of the State of Ohio. My fellow colleagues, please join me in wishing Vera Gillis a very happy 70th birthday.

100 YEARS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT—
A CELEBRATION OF THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. BOEHLERT. Mr. Speaker, last night I had the honor to participate in the celebration of the 100th birthday of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). As I noted in my remarks at the event, NIST was one of the very first and one of the most important actions Congress took at the beginning of the 20th Century.

NIST was established to help bring rationality to the profusion of standards that were plaguing this country at the turn of the last century. As to its future, it could be anything from looking at the molecular structure of ceramics or the security of our computers or guidance to a small manufacturer on how to update operations. We are indebted to NIST for what it has done in the past as I am sure we will be for what it provides us in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I doubt that very many people are aware of NIST, its history and its importance to the nation. Since I touched on many of these points in my address last night, I insert the full text of my remarks for the information of my colleagues at this point in the RECORD.

STATEMENT ON NIST ANNIVERSARY, MARCH 6, 2001

It's a delight and a privilege to join with you this evening to celebrate the 100th birthday of the National Institute of Standards and Technology. And I have to say that the timing of this event is auspicious for me, in

particular. It's great to be assuming the chairmanship of the House Science Committee as NIST is celebrating its centenary because the existence of NIST is concrete proof that Congress can get some things right when it comes to science and technology policy.

Establishing NIST was one the very first and one of the most important actions Congress took at the dawn of the 20th Century—a century that was to see technology and standardization change our world as never before. And we are still reaping the rewards of that foresight as we begin the 21st Century.

I have to note, though, that while NIST is richly deserving of tonight's gala; the festivities are a little out of character for NIST, which from the start has gone about its business in an unassuming, even inconspicuous way. Even the law that created the laboratory didn't have a name—it was known by the rather plain and workaday designation, "the Act of March 3, 1901"—a date that has lived in neither infamy nor fame, a date that no schoolchild has been forced to memorize.

Given NIST's "nose-to-the-grindstone" work ethic, its stream of consistent productivity without fanfare, its focus on the essential but largely invisible foundations of modern technology, one might think that a good title for a history of NIST's first century would be "One Hundred Years of Solitude."

But how extraordinarily misleading that would be—because the actual secret of NIST's success has been its "partnerships"—partnerships with the private sector, partnerships with other federal agencies and laboratories, partnerships with state and local governments. NIST is well known to the people who keep our economy healthy, and it's NIST's ability to work with just about anybody that has kept it fresh, vital and valuable—as fundamental a key to American prosperity as it was the day it was created.

NIST is a worthy and needed partner because its mission is problem-solving. NIST was established to help bring rationality to the profusion of standards that were afflicting the United States at the turn of the last century—a profusion that could have tragic consequences when, for example, major fires could not be extinguished because of varying standards for hoses and hydrants. And that problem-solving ethos has been maintained to this very day—whether NIST is probing abstruse questions about the molecular structure of ceramics, or helping to ensure the security of our computers, or providing guidance to a small manufacturer on how to update his operations through the Manufacturing Extension Program.

And we also still draw on NIST's expertise to solve problems that are endemic to the economy as a whole—with the Advanced Technology Program, for example, which has helped a wide variety of companies pass through the so-called "valley of death" that can prevent good research ideas from becoming good processes or products.

But tonight's focus is not on the past—although NIST's record accomplishment provides plenty of cause for celebration. We're really here to make a downpayment on the future by showing all the current and former directors and staff at NIST how grateful we are for their dedication, their imagination and their insight. Working steadily and fruitfully outside the limelight, they have enabled our nation's reputation for technological progress to shine.

Now it's hard to know what the technology of tomorrow will look like. History is littered with embarrassingly misguided predictions—a few of them even uttered in hearings before the House Science Committee. But I think it's safe to say that, whatever

the technology of the future is, NIST will have played a role in its creation, enhancement or propagation.

So I want again to thank everyone who has made NIST a success and to pledge to all of you that I will do my best to ensure that NIST continues to set the standard for what a federal lab should be.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK R. MASCARENAS

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I now honor an extraordinary human being and great American Frank R. Mascarenas. Mr. Mascarenas was loved and admired by many. He was an educator, an active force in the life of youth in his community, and first and foremost, a loving family man. Sadly, Frank died on January 25 surrounded by friends and family. As family, friends, and former students mount this loss, I would like to honor this great man.

Mr. Mascarenas was an individual that served his country, state, and national well. For most of his life, Frank worked as an educator, Frank began his teaching career in 1959 in Cortez, CO, after having served his country for eight years in the U.S. Army. In addition to being an outstanding teacher throughout the course of his career, Frank was also dedicated to sports and to coaching. He began coaching in Cortez at the same time he began his teaching tenure. As an educator and a coach, he helped to improve the quality of life in his community.

Frank grew up in Montrose, CO, where he was well known and widely admired. He was raised by his grandmother, Manuela Lovato, and Aunt, Cecilia Trujillo. He graduated from Montrose High School and then earned his bachelors of arts degree in education after attending Ft. Lewis College and Adam State Colleges. Frank married his life partner and beautiful wife Carolyn Leech in the summer of 1958. Frank and Carolyn have three children—a son Mark, and daughters Stacey and Kelli.

After teaching and coaching in Cortez until 1981, he took his talents to Rangely where he again had a dramatic impact on the community's youth. In 1991, Frank joined the ranks of Palisade High School where he had a famed coaching tenure. While at Palisade, Frank was an integral part of a remarkable run that brought Palisade four consecutive state championships. This historic championship run was fitting punctuation for Frank's successful career as a coach and educator. Like those great Palisade football teams, Frank was a champion in the truest meaning of the word. More than just winning football games, though, Frank helped instill lifeshaping virtues in both his players and students alike.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, as you can see, this extraordinary human being truly deserves our gratitude for his service to our community. Frank R. Mascarenas may be gone, but his legacy will long endure in the minds of those who were fortunate enough to know him. Colorado is a better place because of Frank Mascarenas.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Carolyn, and his children, Mark, Stacey, and Kelli, during this difficult time. Like these loved ones, western Colorado will miss Frank greatly.

VILLAGE OF PINECREST CELEBRATES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF INCORPORATION INTO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the fifth anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Pinecrest, of which I am a proud resident, as the County of Miami-Dade's twenty-ninth municipality. It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mayor Evelyn Langlieb Greer, the Village Council, and all the residents of Pinecrest on five productive and successful years as part of one of the nation's largest counties.

Mayor Langlieb Greer's leadership and that of the Council has certainly been instrumental in making the Village of Pinecrest one of the best and most rewarding places to live in South Florida. Its schools, some of the best in the County, its parks and recreational areas, and its convenient location make Pinecrest one of the most desirable residential areas in Miami. My family and I are honored to call this community home and I commend the Mayor and the Council for working so hard to ensure that it remains one of the best places to live.

The residents of Pinecrest should also be proud to have Village Manager Peter Lombardi, Assistant Village Manager Yocelyn Galiano Gomez, and their staff working to ensure that the Village policies and laws are smoothly implemented and administered. Without their dedicated service and that of Police Chief John Hohensee, Operations Manager Michael Liotti, and all of Pinecrest's police officers, truly our Village's finest Pinecrest would not be the safe and wonderful place that it is.

The sense of community and hometown atmosphere is enhanced and complemented by the many benefits of the surrounding greater Miami area. I have lived in Pinecrest for many years and never cease to marvel at the beauty and comfort of this area.

I ask my Congressional colleagues to join me in congratulating the Village of Pinecrest and wishing much continued success to: Vice Mayor Cindie Blanck, and Councilmen Barry Blaxberg, Leslie Bowe, and Robert Hingston.

DROP IN MEDICARE IMPROPER PAYMENTS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reported that improper Medicare payments to doctors, hospitals and other health

care providers declined in fiscal year (FY) 2000 to an estimated level of 6.8 percent. This level compares with an error rate of approximately 8 percent in FY 1999. The error rate has fallen by roughly half since it was first estimated at approximately 14 percent in FY 1996.

The FY 2000 payment error rate represents improper payments of \$11.9 billion out of total payments of \$173.6 billion in the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program. This improper payment amount compares with improper payments of \$13.5 billion in FY 1999 and \$23.2 billion in FY 1996.

The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) met its target for reducing the Medicare error rate to 7 percent in FY 2000 and continues to take steps to meet its FY 2002 goal of 5 percent.

Mr. Speaker, this continued decline in the Medicare error rate demonstrates the success of all the actions that HCFA has taken to reduce billing errors in Medicare over the past five years. According to the Inspector General, the significant, sustained improvement reflects HCFA's improved oversight, its efforts to clarify Medicare payment policies, and its insistence that doctors and health care providers fully document the services that they provide. Other factors have been new initiatives and resources to prevent, detect and eliminate errors and fraud in Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, many criticized HCFA when the payment error rate was 14 percent and demanded that HCFA reduce it.

Now many criticize HCFA for the actions it has taken to reduce payment errors and for insisting that providers file claims accurately. I say that we should praise HCFA for its efforts to reduce Medicare payment errors, and we should ensure that HCFA does not diminish its efforts to reduce those errors still further. We should not be satisfied with payment errors in Medicare.

To achieve further reductions in Medicare payment errors, we must reduce the complexity of Medicare payment rules and improve provider education and information, but we must continue to insist on accuracy in claims filing. We must increase the resources available to HCFA to help providers file their claims properly and to monitor claims to ensure correctness. We must also provide the resources to upgrade HCFA's claims processing systems and other information technology systems, without which we cannot hope to continue to reduce errors in Medicare payments.

It is important to understand that the error rate does not measure the level of fraud in Medicare, although some errors could be the result of fraud. Instead, the error rate measures the percentage of payments made by Medicare that were not supported by documentation by providers or that otherwise did not meet Medicare payment requirements.

According to the Inspector General, virtually all of the claims examined in the audit were paid correctly by Medicare based on the information that providers submitted in the claims. The error rate was calculated by examining a statistically valid sample of Medicare claims, and auditors reviewed the medical records supporting the claims with the assistance of medical experts. The sample findings were then projected over the universe of Medicare fee-for-service benefit payments.