

## TRIBUTE TO GINA THOMPSON

**HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an amazing girl, my friend and neighbor Gina Thompson, who has overcome obstacles to become a starting point guard for the Hale School basketball team.

What makes Gina's accomplishment so momentous is that she is the only girl in a league of boys. Hale School doesn't have a girl's basketball team, but Gina, who just turned 14, is just too good a player to let that stand in the way. While other girls tried out this year, Gina was the only one to make the cut. As a starting point guard, she averages six points a game and has had no problem gaining her teammates' respect.

Most importantly, Gina has accomplished all this despite being diagnosed with juvenile diabetes at age nine. Just as she never let her gender become an obstacle in playing the game she loves, neither has Gina allowed diabetes to get in the way. She does have to give herself three insulin shots a day and continuously monitor herself to see that her sugar count remains normal, but Gina claims it is no big deal.

Gina has even extended her basketball activities beyond Hale School. She plays for the girls' team at St. Symphorsa (where she attends CCD) and the eighth-grade Windy City AAU club basketball team. After graduation, she plans on taking her game to Maria High School.

Gina is an incredible girl who has faced her challenges head-on to become a success at the game she loves. I whole-heartedly congratulate Gina and wish her all the best in the future.

DORENE LOWERY—TENNESSEE  
TEACHER OF THE YEAR**HON. ZACH WAMP**

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, Dorene Lowery has been an employee of the Bradley County Schools for 17 years. During her tenure she has taught grades four, five and six at McDonald School, Prospect School and Black Fox School. She is currently serving as principal at Michigan Avenue Elementary School.

Ms. Lowery has been recognized as a Black Fox Elementary Teacher of the Year 2000, Bradley County Teacher of the Year 2000, District Teacher of the Year 2001 and most recently Tennessee Teacher of the Year 2001.

She indicates there are many reasons she decided to become a teacher—primarily heritage. Her parents were major influences in her life. Her mother, Mary Harris, instilled in her a love for books. Her father, Ron Harris, who has been a professor at Lee University for 35 years is responsible for instilling in her a love for teaching. He tells Dorene her favorite phrases were always, "Why?", "How does it work?", and "Show me." Another reason she became a teacher was her love of school. She would love to come home from kindergarten

and teach her younger brother the things she had learned that day.

"For me, there was never a career choice to make. I always knew I was a teacher. I have found through the years that the quest to be the agent of academic growth in students and to witness their successes has not diminished. To help a child step out into the uncharted frontiers of their mind and experiences spurs me on and provides me with boundless joy. I affect eternity. No one can tell where my influence will stop. For this reason, I TEACH." Her husband is Steve Lowery. They have no children.

## HONORING TOM STRICKLAND

**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge and commend the work of Tom Strickland, who has served the federal government and Colorado with distinction as United States Attorney.

Tom Strickland was nominated by President Clinton and confirmed by the United States Senate to serve as U.S. Attorney for Colorado a little over two years ago. Before that time he was a successful attorney with the law firm of Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber & Strickland, and prior to that was a senior advisor to Colorado Governor Dick Lamm.

Tom and his wife, Beth, have been good friends to my father and me. I have enjoyed his association and believe that his service as U.S. Attorney will be remembered for a high degree of professionalism and a commitment to the welfare of Colorado and the nation.

I believe Tom's service as U.S. Attorney ought to be recognized in this House and I submit for the RECORD the following words from the March 28, 2001 addition of the Denver Post, which say better than I can how his service will be remembered.

## GOOD WORK, TOM STRICKLAND

We'd like to tip our hats to U.S. Attorney Tom Strickland, who will be leaving office Saturday, for a job well done during the nearly two years he's been in office.

Strickland was sworn in April 21, 1999—the day after the Columbine massacre—but in a relatively short period of time acquired a reputation as a tough, effective law-and-order prosecutor.

Strickland took the initiative in establishing Colorado's version of Project Exile, a Virginia program aimed at keeping guns out of the hands of felons. Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies cooperated in prosecuting the often-overlooked federal violation when felons busted for other crimes were found to possess firearms.

Colorado Project Exile enforces existing gun laws, prosecuting criminals in the jurisdiction with the toughest penalties. During Strickland's tenure, the number of federal firearms prosecutions tripled from 54 defendants in 1999 to 147 in 2000. The successful program is a rare bit of common ground where such diverse factions as the National Rifle Association, Handgun Control Inc. and SAFE Colorado can agree.

But Strickland also targeted other criminal groups, from the Sons of Silence outlaw motorcycle gang to big-time drug traffickers, and even a group of federal prison guards who were brutalizing inmates.

The University of Texas Law School graduate was an effective administrator and well-respected by veteran lawyers in his office.

Strickland is a Democrat who was asked for his resignation by President Bush, a Republican. John Suthers, former El Paso County district attorney, is considered the front-runner for Strickland's post.

One of the unfortunate aspects of the spoils system is that positions such as U.S. Attorney are presidential appointments, and whenever the party in power in the White House changes, many able public servants are asked to leave. Strickland is a recent example; an earlier one is Richard Stacy, who as U.S. Attorney for Wyoming, had to resign when the Clinton administration took office, despite being an aggressive, effective prosecutor.

It's a shame that well-qualified public servants like Strickland and Stacy are asked to resign instead of being given a second look, party affiliation notwithstanding.

THE INCREASE THE PEACE  
RESOLUTION**HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce an important resolution which urges the House of Representatives to support "Increase the Peace Day" events throughout the country.

On April 20, 2000, on the one-year anniversary of the tragedy at Columbine High School, students, teachers, parents, and community leaders from Challenger Middle School in Lake Los Angeles, California hosted an "Increase the Peace Day".

The program featured the formation of a human peace sign and a presentation by a former skinhead who turned his life around and now works with the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance.

The highlight of the day was when the 650 students of Challenger signed an "Increase the Peace Pledge" in order to avoid any similar acts of school violence. Among the promises in the Pledge were to find a peaceful solution to conflicts, to not hit another person, to not threaten another person, to report all rumors of violence to an adult, to celebrate diversity, and to seek help when feeling lonely or confused.

I was proud to join the other supporters of "Increase the Peace Day" and be a part of this incredible event.

In fact, the event was so successful Challenger is having their "Second Annual Increase the Peace Day" on April 20, 2001. They are expecting over 2,000 participants this year. Additionally, they are sponsoring an essay-writing contest in which the winner will be flown to Washington, D.C. to share their ideas on ensuring school safety with national leaders.

I would like to take a moment to recognize the outstanding efforts of teacher Bruce Galler, who came up with the original idea for "Increase the Peace Day" because he believes that something can be done. Through his efforts, Challenger Middle School students have promoted the ideals of peace in their school and throughout the community.

As such, I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution and to encourage their local communities to institute a similar program.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FAIR PAY  
ACT OF 2001**HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON**OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today Senator TOM HARKIN and I are introducing the Fair Pay Act of 2001, a bill that would require employers to pay equal wages to women and men performing equivalent work but not the same work in an effort to remedy the pay inequities that women continue to endure. We introduce this bill simultaneously in both Houses as an indication of the preeminent importance many American families attach to equal pay today.

A recent Labor Department study, requested by Senator HARKIN and voted by Congress last term bolsters the goals of the Fair Pay Act (FPA). The Labor Department studied wage trends among federal contractors. Its conclusions are far more important than the perhaps predictable finding that the gender gap for federal contractors is about the same as it is for U.S. employers as a whole. The most important Labor Department finding is that the major cause of the pay gap is the segregation of women into female-gender occupations. The Department makes the startling finding that, "Since 1979, the contribution of occupational segregation to the pay gap has jumped from explaining 18 to 46 percent of the gap." This finding virtually demonstrates our Fair Pay Act claim that the only way to combat pay discrimination today is to attack directly the practice of paying women less because they are doing "women's work." We cannot come to grips with the pay problems of the average American family without confronting the reality that the average woman works in an occupation that is 70 percent female, while the average man works in an occupation that is 29 percent female. Pay tracks gender.

Today, many more women have equivalent pay problems than traditional equal pay problems, thanks to the 1963 Equal Pay Act. Important as it is to update the EPA, it has been clear, at least since I chaired the EEOC in the Carter Administration, that the EPA needs major revision to cope with the stubborn pay problems that trap most women and their families. The Fair Pay Act accomplishes the necessary revision without tampering with the market system. A woman would file a discrimination claim but, as in all discrimination cases, she would have to prove that the reason for the gap between herself and a male co-worker doing equivalent work in the same workplace is discrimination and not other reasons, such as legitimate market factors. Gender, of course, is not a legitimate market factor.

The good news from the Labor Department study is that gender segregation has fallen since 1970 because women with greater opportunities have moved into traditionally male occupations. The bad news is that there is a limit to how much we want to encourage teachers, nurses, factory workers, librarians, and other indispensable workers to abandon these vital occupations in order to be paid a decent wage. The frightening flight of women from vital work and occupations has left children without teachers, hospitals without nurses, and communities and employers without other vital workers.

The Fair Pay Act recognizes that if men and women are doing comparable work, they

should be paid a comparable wage. If a woman is an emergency services operator, a female-dominated profession, she should be paid no less than a fire dispatcher, a male-dominated profession, simply because each of these jobs has been dominated by one sex. If a woman is a social worker, a traditionally female occupation, she should not earn less than a probation officer, a traditionally male job, simply because of the gender associated with each of these jobs.

The FPA, like the Equal Pay Act (EPA), will not tamper with the market system. As with the EPA, the burden will be on the plaintiff to prove discrimination. She must show that the reason for the disparity is sex or race discrimination, not legitimate market factors.

As women's employment has become an increasingly significant factor in the real dollar income of American families, fair pay between the sexes has escalated in importance. There are remaining Equal Pay Act problems in our society, but the greatest barrier to pay fairness for women and their families today is a line drawn in the workplace between men and women doing work of comparable value. I ask for your support of the Fair Pay Act to pay women what they are worth so that their families may get what they need and deserve.

INTRODUCTION OF THE COLORADO  
NORTHERN FRONT RANGE MOUNTAIN  
BACKDROP PROTECTION  
STUDY ACT**HON. MARK UDALL**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 3, 2001*

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Colorado Northern Front Range Mountain Backdrop Protection Study Act.

The bill intended to help local communities identify ways to protect the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area, especially the region just west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site. The Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest includes much of the land in this backdrop area, but there are other lands involved as well.

Rising dramatically from the Great Plains, the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains provides a scenic mountain backdrop to many communities in the Denver metropolitan area and elsewhere in Colorado. The portion of the range within and adjacent to the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest also includes a diverse array of wildlife habitats and provides many opportunities for outdoor recreation.

The open-space character of this mountain backdrop is an important esthetic and economic asset for adjoining communities, making them attractive locations for homes and businesses. But rapid population growth in the northern Front Range area of Colorado is increasing recreational use of the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest and is also placing increased pressure for development of other lands within and adjacent to that national forest.

We can see this throughout Colorado and especially along the Front Range. Homes and shopping centers are sprawling up valleys and along highways that feed into the Front

Range. This development then spreads out along the ridges and mountain tops that make up the backdrop. We are in danger of losing to development many of the qualities that have helped attract new residents. So, it is important to better understand what steps might be taken to avoid or lessen that risk—and this bill is designed to help us do just that.

Already, local governments and other entities have provided important protection for portions of this mountain backdrop, especially in the northern Denver-metro area. However, some portions of the backdrop in this part of Colorado remain unprotected and are at risk of losing their open-space qualities. This bill acknowledges the good work of the local communities to preserve open spaces along the backdrop and aims to assist further efforts along the same lines.

The bill does not interfere with the authority of local authorities regarding land use planning. It also does not infringe on private property rights. Instead, it will bring the land protection experience of the Forest Service to the table to assist local efforts to protect areas that comprise the backdrop. The bill envisions that to the extent the Forest Service be involved with federal lands, it will work in collaboration with local communities, the state and private parties.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe it is in the national interest for the federal government to assist local communities to identify ways to protect the mountain backdrop in this part of Colorado. The backdrop beckoned settlers westward and presented an imposing impediment to their forward progress that suggested similar challenges ahead. This first exposure to the harshness and humbling majesty of the Rocky Mountain West helped define a region. The pioneers' independent spirit and respect for nature still lives with us to this day. We need to work to preserve it by protecting the mountain backdrop as a cultural and natural heritage for ourselves and generations to come. God may forgive us for our failure to do so, but our children won't.

For the information of our colleagues, I am attaching a fact sheet about this bill.

COLORADO NORTHERN FRONT RANGE  
MOUNTAIN BACKDROP PROTECTION STUDY ACT

Generally: The bill would help local communities preserve the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in the northern sections of the Denver-metro area in a region generally west of the Rocky Flats Environmental Technology site.

Front Range Mountain Backdrop: The backdrop consists of the mountainous foothills, the Continental Divide and the peaks in between that create the striking visual backdrop of the Denver-metro area and throughout Colorado. Development in the Denver-metro area is encroaching in the Front Range backdrop area, and thus adversely affecting the esthetic, wildlife, open space and recreational qualities of this geographic feature. Now is the time to shape the future of this part of the Front Range. There is a real but fleeting opportunity to protect both Rocky Flats—a "crown jewel" of open space and wildlife habitat—and to assist local communities to protect the scenic, wildlife, and other values of the mountain backdrop.

## WHAT THE BILL DOES

Study and Report: The bill requires the Forest Service to study the ownership patterns of the lands comprising the Front Range Mountain Backdrop in a region generally