

volunteerism. Remembered by her friend Mr. Lewis Heldt for "all of her accomplishments over her long, active lifetime," as well as for her efforts in her role as Honorary Chairperson for the last Fallen Timbers Battlefield fund drive, Ruth Quackenbush Dodge and her good works will truly be missed. We extend to her son David, her five grandchildren, and her six great-grandchildren our deepest condolences. At the same time, we celebrate her remarkable accomplishments and honor her memory by trying to live by her exemplary pioneering and socially responsible spirit.

SUPPORTING RAILROAD FAMILIES

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, as a co-sponsor of the Railroad Retirement and Survivors Improvement Act of 2001, I urge the House of Representatives to pass this legislation—it marks a vital opportunity to strengthen the retirement benefits for thousands of railroad families.

This legislation modernizes and strengthens the retirement system which has covered railroad workers for 65 years. It provides more secure benefits at lower costs to employers and employees, has the support of both rail management and labor, and provides the kind of solid retirement support we need for the 673,000 retirees and beneficiaries.

Among the key elements of this legislation we debate today are:

- provides for increased responsibility by the railroad industry for the financial health of the Railroad Retirement system

- the legislation improves the benefits for retirees and their families; in particular it makes major improvements in benefits for widows and widowers—a key in meeting today's high costs in areas like energy and health

- reduces the current early retirement age of 62 with 30 years of service to age 60 with 30 years of service

- tax rates are substantially reduced for employees

- and currently it takes 10 years to vest for retirement benefits, but this reduces it to 5–7 years, much more similar to other industries.

This reform legislation is the result of 2½ years of negotiations and it will build on the stability of the railroad retirement system, the fairness of retirement benefits, and the need to make adjustments to help retirees meet their needs.

This bi-partisan legislation is fair, is needed, and is long overdue. I urge the House of Representatives to overwhelmingly pass this legislation and the Senate to do likewise.

SHARK PROTECTION ACT OF 2001

HON. ENI F.H. FALÉOMAVAEGA

OF AMERICAN SAMOA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Shark Protection Act of 2001.

Last year Congress passed and President Clinton signed Public Law 106–557, the Shark

Finning Prohibition Act. The goal of that law is to prohibit the activity known as shark finning—the catching of live sharks, removing their fins, and throwing the carcasses back into the water, retaining only the fins.

The practice of shark finning had been prohibited in all U.S. waters except in the Pacific Ocean. Last year's bill prohibited in the U.S. Pacific removal of shark fins and discarding of the carcasses, having custody of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses on board a fishing vessel, and the landing of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses by any vessel.

I had hoped to also prohibit vessels from being in U.S. waters with shark fins on board and the selling of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses in last year's bill, but that was not practical for two reasons. Article 17 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea grants all vessels a right of innocent passage through the territorial seas of other member states. A prohibition of the loading and unloading of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses is permissible under subsection (g) of Article 19 of the Convention, but it appears that any attempt to restrict passage of vessels solely transiting our waters would be in conflict with this international treaty to which the United States is a party.

I believe Congress can, however, prohibit the offering for sale, selling, and purchasing in interstate or foreign commerce of shark fins without the corresponding carcasses anywhere within our national jurisdiction, and that is what this bill does. This might arguably be included as a prohibited act under Section 301(1)(G) [16 U.S.C. 1857(1)(G)] of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, which makes it unlawful for any person to "ship, transport, offer for sale, sell, purchase, import, export, or have custody, control, or possession of, any fish taken or retained . . .". I am concerned that the definition of "fish" found at Section 3(12) of Magnuson-Stevens [16 U.S.C. 1802(12)] includes only whole fish (including sharks), but not parts of fish. The bill I am introducing today would clarify this point by prohibiting the selling of shark fins without carcasses.

Mr. Speaker, the practice of shark finning is continuing to this day in the Pacific. Earlier this year, after passage of the Shark Finning Prohibition Act, a non-fishing vessel entered the port of American Samoa with shark fins on board. This "cargo" was not seized based on the "innocent passage doctrine" noted above. As long as shark fin soup is so popular in many parts of Asia that people are willing to pay \$100 for a bowl of the soup, the problem will continue. We need an international ban on shark finning. Public Law 106–557 initiated a process to accomplish this, and I look forward to receiving from the Administration a report later this year on this important area, as required under that law.

I want to do all I can to stop the wasteful practice of shark finning, and I urge my colleagues to join me by supporting this bill.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JACK QUINN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall Nos. 286, 287, 288, and 289 I was unavoidably de-

tained in the district while at Georgetown University on family educational business.

A TRIBUTE TO WALTER BURKS

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I will be unable to attend the homegoing services for your husband, father, brother, and my friend, Walter Burks. Please accept this letter in my absence.

I observed Walter Burks from a far as a teen, working in the campaigns of the late Ambassador Carl Stokes, and the Honorable Congressman Louis Stokes. I came to admire this man some called the "Silver Fox" (silver for the hair color and fox for his leadership skills), as he lead the Department of Personnel of the City of Cleveland, in the cabinet of then Mayor Carl B. Stokes. My summer internship in the Department of Public Utilities gave me more opportunities to see him in action. He seldom raised his voice and understood the important roll he played in assuring that everyone had access to employment opportunities with the City of Cleveland.

As I matured and decided to run for public office, Walter was always there to support and encourage me. After public office, Walter, even in his private business continued to work to improve the lives of the people of his community. His housing developments are testament to that work.

My only regret is that I didn't have a chance to say goodbye. So Walter, since I know you are looking down upon us, Thank You, I Love You, and God Bless You. Rest well and if we do as you have done, we will meet again.

I join with the residents of the 11th Congressional District, who mourn the lost of a great civic leader, political activist, family man, and friend.

[From the Cleveland Plain Dealer]

WALTER BURKS, 77, WAS BUILDER, CIVIC LEADER, POLITICAL ACTIVIST

(By Richard M. Peery)

Plain Dealer Reporter

SHAKER HEIGHTS.—Walter Burks, 77, a developer and political activist who built more than 200 homes in Cleveland, died Thursday at University Hospitals.

Burks was a former trustee of Cleveland State University. He served on the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections and the State Board of Education. Mayor Carl B. Stokes appointed him personnel director and chairman of the Civil Service Commission.

In 1974, he formed Burks Electric Co. and participated in commercial and public building projects, including the rebuilding of the Regional Transit Authority's Shaker rapid line.

Burks was born in Cleveland. He attended East Technical High School and studied engineering at Penn College.

Drafted into the Marine Corps during World War II, he was a sergeant in an engineers unit on Eniwetok and the Marshall Islands in the Pacific. After the war, he and his first wife, Cynthia, built a home on E. 147th St. in Mount Pleasant. Although banks refused to lend to nonwhites in that area, he obtained financing from a black insurance company. He later helped friends build homes nearby.

Burks worked as a mail clerk for Cleveland Municipal Court and was promoted to supervisor of the trustee division, but he spent evenings and weekends on construction projects. After he joined Stokes' staff in the 1960s, he put special effort into hiring and promoting minorities.

As a builder, Burks concentrated in the 1980s on converting former schools into apartments for the elderly. When he was accused of failing to follow complicated HUD regulations, he said the fault lay with the government. A jury cleared him.

In 1989, Burks undertook what was considered a high-risk project when he constructed Glenville Commons, the first new homes to be built in the area in more than 50 years. Its success was followed by a surge of home building in the city.

At the behest of Mayor Michael R. White, a former business partner, a park on Parkview Dr. in Glenville was named for him.

Burks and his wife, the former Charmaine Colwell, lived in Shaker Heights.

He also is survived by a son, Dr. David of Ann Arbor, Mich.; a daughter, Karen Bailey of Richmond Heights; three grandchildren; two sisters; and five brothers.

Services will be 10:30 a.m. at Antioch Baptist Church, 8869 Cedar Ave., Cleveland.

Arrangements are by E.F. Boyd & Son Funeral Home of Cleveland.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE STATE
OF COLORADO ON ITS 125TH AN-
NIVERSARY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. One hundred years after the United States became a Nation, Colorado became the 38th state in the Union. In recognition of this historic moment, I stand here to pay tribute to the great State of Colorado. I would like to share a little historical background, and some lesser known facts about the state in honor of this anniversary.

According to the state archives, when the Colorado Territory was populated by only approximately 100,000 people, thirty-nine members of the constitutional convention gathered for the purpose of preparing Colorado's constitution. President Grant declared Colorado a state on August 1, 1876, one week after the Governor's secretary, John Reigart, set off toward Washington, D.C. with a copy of the constitution and other necessary documents.

Since then, Colorado has continued to make history. The stunning view from Pikes Peak inspired Katherine Lee Bates to write one of our country's most popular patriotic songs, "America the Beautiful." On a less serious note, Denver "lays claim to the invention of the cheeseburger," according to 50states.com. Colorado is also home to some of America's greatest heroes. Pueblo, for instance, has held the honor of being the only city in the Nation with four living recipients of the Medal of Honor. In addition, Colorado Springs is home to the distinguished United States Air Force Academy.

Among its natural wonders, Colorado is home to the world's largest outdoor natural hot springs pool, which spans over two city blocks. The pool was visited by former president Teddy Roosevelt, and by "Doc" Holliday,

who hoped the natural springs would cure his tuberculosis. Other geological marvels include Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument and the Great Sand Dunes, plus fifty-two mountain peaks over 14,000 feet high, and the headwaters of over 20 rivers. The Nation's highest city, Leadville, which boasts an elevation of 10,430 feet, also rests in Colorado. In addition, Colorado holds three quarters of the Nation's land area with an altitude over 10,000 feet, along with 222 state wildlife areas. With such a variety of natural beauty and resources, it is no wonder that Colorado provides agriculture, summer and winter recreation, and a pioneering spirit to millions of residents and visitors each year.

Mr. Speaker, there is no end to the wonder and greatness of this state. It is with great pride that I stand here today in honor of the 125th anniversary of the State of Colorado.

HONORING THE 50TH WEDDING AN-
NIVERSARY OF CASEY AND
JEAN BROWN

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor the 50th wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Casey and Jean Brown from Ignacio, Colorado. As family and friends will gather to celebrate this joyous occasion, I too would like to recognize them at this special time. Following their hearts throughout this 50-year journey has led to happiness and a loving life together.

Casey and Jean were married on August 5, 1951 in Hatch, New Mexico after meeting each other at New Mexico State University. Following a honeymoon in Mexico, the couple relocated to Laramie, Wyoming, where Casey received a Master's Degree in Sheep and Wool Production. After his schooling and a brief stint as a college professor, the couple joined Casey's father in his sheep business located in Aztec, California.

Casey and Jean decided to move one more time in 1958 to a small farm in La Plata, New Mexico. It is here that they raised their five children. Following suit with past experience, the family moved one more time to Ignacio in 1978. Jean had always dreamed of becoming a nurse, and this served as the catalyst to pursue her dreams. She was employed by Mercy Hospital in Durango until she retired. While Jean was a nurse, Casey once again started his own sheep business on their ranch. Even amidst all of their responsibilities, they found time to offer services to their community where they were involved in the Woolgrowers Auxiliary, the American Sheep Industry Commission and other organizations.

Love has flourished between these two hearts, but not without dedication and hard work. For this momentous occasion, Casey is treating his devoted wife to a trip to Scotland—her ancestral land. This celebration of 50 years is a remarkable accomplishment and is to be commended. Mr. Speaker, it is with excitement and admiration that I extend my congratulations to Casey and Jean and offer them my best wishes for many more years to come.

HONORING THE GRAND JUNCTION
VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL
CENTER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I would like to pay tribute to the Grand Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center for receiving the 2001 President's Quality Award that highlights continued improvement and management of high caliber care to veterans who so diligently served our Nation.

This facility serves all veterans in an area of 50,000 square miles and 17 counties in Western Colorado and Eastern Utah. With the overarching goal of being "the preferred health care system for all veterans," the Medical Center constantly strives to improve itself and help those in need of their services. The President's Quality Award highlights the Center's integration of their innovative management techniques, outstanding dedication to customer service and dynamic performance that will enhance the Center's capabilities in the new century. The Grand Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center has implemented a "virtual circle of care" policy that involves every patient, and this program has inspired similar programs around the country. Not satisfied with just internal improvements, the Center has added new community outreach efforts that seek to build upon their primary, specialty and extended care. All of these continued efforts have resulted in consistently higher scores in patient care and satisfaction from the Department of Veterans Affairs and from external agencies and hospitals.

The Grand Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center truly is an exemplary model of the care that our distinguished veterans deserve. While providing the highest care and improving their overall performance with an emphasis on customer satisfaction, the Center has worked very hard to become one of the finest facilities in the Nation. The invaluable services that Grand Junction Veterans Affairs Medical Center provides truly deserve the recognition of this body.

HONORING OTIS CHARTIER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I would like to recognize Mr. Otis Meril Chartier, who received the Bronze Star for his service during WWII. He served our country 56 years ago and just recently received this distinguished honor.

At a family picnic not too far from Parker, Colorado, Otis was awarded the Bronze Star in recognition of his courage in February of 1945. During WWII, he and another soldier took on a German machine gun haven where they disrupted its activity and eliminated two enemy soldiers. A howitzer shell then bombarded the nest and the area was neutralized. For this valorous effort, Otis was granted the Bronze Star. His courageous act was executed only 4 months before the end of the war.