

alone, without serious consideration of whether these human gene patents are helping us achieve our broader societal goals.

Congress has the ability to change the patent law if it is not serving the public interest. We do so in small or large ways nearly every Congress. It is clearly time to review whether this body of law is working. It is obvious from some of the anecdotes that I have cited that the current system is causing strains. Many labs and universities are steering in the biomedical sciences is becoming increasingly sticky. Genetic tests could become prohibitively costly or inaccessible, or could become engulfed in wasteful, legalistic cross-licensing scrambles.

This bill would direct the OSTP, through the National Academy of Sciences if it wishes, to study these issues, to report to the Congress with its findings, and to lead the development of Federal policies based on these findings. This would be the first systematic study of where human gene patenting policy is taking us, and it is long overdue.

Some may see a contradiction between these two bills—namely, that the second bill calls for a study of problems for which I have already proposed solutions in the first bill. However, I believe there is ample justification for the limited reforms I propose in the “Research and Diagnostic Act” and that in short order these steps will be shown to serve the public good. A decision on whether Congress should make even more dramatic changes to the genetic patenting regime (for example, by making the diagnostic exemption retroactive) should await further study and discussion. The study called for in the second bill would provide us with guidance for those additional steps.

Abraham Lincoln described the patent system as “adding the fuel of interest to the fire of genius”. I am concerned that the current Federal patent policy as applied to genetic sequences may be smothering the fire of genius. Patents are intended to encourage openness and to prevent trade secrets. Current policy, however, appears to be inhibiting research and information sharing, and choking off innovation and the broad availability of novel genetic technologies. I hope that the two bills being introduced today will serve to focus attention on these issues. More importantly, I hope that they will ensure that the fantastic advances in medical genetics are fully harnessed for the benefit not just of patent holders, but also of the broader public.

PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING
FIRE-FIGHTER GERALD L.
BAPTISTE—LADDER NO. 9

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2002

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, as a Tribute to Firefighter Gerald L. Baptiste of Ladder Number 9, a member of the Vulcan's Society and one of the fallen heroes of September 11th, I would like to insert the following proclamation into the record:

Whereas, September 11, 2001 was a day of horror and tragedy that will forever live in the memory of Americans, and;

Whereas, more than 3,000 people from many occupations, nationalities, ethnic

groups, religions and creeds were brutally murdered by terrorists, and;

Whereas, members of the New York City Fire Department, New York City Police Department, Port Authority and other Public Safety Personnel, through their valiant, courageous and heroic efforts saved the lives of thousands under unprecedented destructive circumstances, and;

Whereas, more than 300 New York City Firefighters lost their lives in the effort to save others, and

Whereas, Congressman Major R. Owens and the people of the 11th Congressional District salute the bravery and dedication of all who gave their full measure of devotion, and;

Whereas, we deem it appropriate to highlight the courage and valor of individuals and groups in a variety of forms and ceremonies. Now therefore be it

Resolved: That on this 10th Day of March, Two Thousand and Two, Congressman Major R. Owens, and representatives of the people of the 11th Congressional District, pause to salute the sacrifices of these honored men, and to offer their heartfelt condolences to families of these African American Firefighters who died at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.

That the text of this resolution shall be placed in the Congressional Record of the United States House of Representatives.

Given by my hand and seal this 10th day of March, Two Thousand and Two in the Year of our Lord.

TRIBUTE TO GAIL TORREANO

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2002

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reflect on the contributions of SBC Ameritech Michigan and its President Gail Torreano, as they are both honored on March 22nd by the Oak Park Business and Education Alliance for their outstanding work in the community of Oak Park, Michigan. The Oak Park Business and Education Alliance was established in 1993, and is a nonprofit organization of educators, businesses and government entities that provide assistance to the Oak Park School District to improve the individual education experiences of students and prepare them for the modern workforce.

Ms. Torreano's career and other accomplishments demonstrate her strong commitment to community activism. A graduate of Central Michigan University, she has served as Associate Director of the Michigan Special Olympics in Mount Pleasant. Among the many boards she has served on are the Detroit Chamber of Commerce, Detroit Chapter for the NAACP Fight for Freedom Fund dinner for 2002, Michigan Virtual University, and the Economic Club of Detroit.

SBC Ameritech Michigan has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards including the Michigan Deaf Association “Employer of the Year” in 2001 for their contribution to the professional growth and development of its deaf and hard of hearing employees. They also received the highest commendation from the NAACP 2001 Telecommunications Report Card—a program aimed at measuring corporate America's commitment to people of color. In addition, the American Society on Aging and the National Minority Supplier Development Council named SBC “Corporation of the Year” in 2000.

Ms. Torreano's and SBC's commitment and support of the communities where they serve is, indeed, commendable.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the commitment of SBC Ameritech Michigan and its President, Gail Torreano, to the community of Oak Park and the Business and Education Alliance.

CHINA'S MILITARY EXPANSION

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue of utmost importance to our national security. On Tuesday, March 5th, the Washington Post reported the People's Republic of China has increased its military spending by over 17% for the second consecutive year.

As I have pointed out many times on the House Floor, China's desire is for complete dominance and hegemony in the Asian-Pacific region.

Communist China's attempts to build a nuclear arsenal capable of defeating the United States are undeniable. In that regard, the addition of multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles is the PRC's most significant threat to the United States. This targeted spending increase is clearly designed to close the nuclear gap that exists between the United States and China.

China's military buildup is especially disconcerting considering its much publicized goal of controlling Taiwan. Mr. Speaker, as you know, China has said it will take back Taiwan by whatever means necessary. Along these lines, Chinese military leaders have openly questioned whether the United States would be willing to sacrifice Los Angeles in our attempts to protect Taipei. We must be prepared to defend ourselves against this type of overt aggression.

Mr. Speaker, this is why I have been so vehement in articulating the need to act decisively to build a ballistic missile defense. The fact that our country remains completely vulnerable to a ballistic missile attack is a reflection of our lack of political will to build an adequate defense. The technology for a ballistic missile defense is available, and has been for years and even decades. It is obvious China will neither lay aside its obsessive quest to build and maintain an offensive nuclear missile program, nor cut its massive military spending. There is only one acceptable response to this threat. We need to fully fund a robust ballistic missile defense program, encompassing a variety of technologies and defenses, and we must accomplish this without delay.

Mr. Speaker, at this point in the Record I submit the text of the March 5th article to which I have been referring. I commend this article to our colleagues and all observers of these proceedings.

[From the Washington Post Foreign Service, Mar. 5, 2002]

CHINA RAISES DEFENSE BUDGET AGAIN

(By John Pomfret)

BEIJING.—China will announce another 17 percent rise in defense spending this week, completing a one-third increase in acknowledged military expenditures over the last