

existing tax benefits of offering coverage to employees and the public and private programs for which they are eligible.

Lack of information should not be an additional barrier to health insurance access. We must begin now.

WASHINGTON, DC, *May 1, 2002.*

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

HON. RICHARD A. GEPHARDT,
Minority Leader, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER HASTERT AND MINORITY LEADER GEPHARDT: We are writing to express our dismay and disappointment in the latest recommendation by the Administration to pit provider against provider by using reductions to hospitals' market basket update to restore payments to physicians. We believe this proposal is short-sighted and ill-advised. While we certainly agree that physicians deserve fair and adequate reimbursement, the Administration's proposal jeopardizes the health of patients, the viability of our communities, and the financial stability of our hospitals.

The problems facing the Medicare program will not be solved without setting priorities and funding them through honest budgeting. The assumption by the Administration that Medicare will grow at a rate 10 percent less than projected by the Congressional Budget Office, and slower than medical inflation is irresponsible. Moreover, cutting Medicare payments for one provider to give to another fails to address the issue at hand: what are our priorities in the Medicare program, and are hospitals and doctors among them? We believe that they are both priorities and ought to be funded accordingly.

Therefore, we strongly disagree with the Administration's recommendation to use hospital reimbursement as a "cash cow" for other provider adjustments. Hospitals are not only the backbones of our healthcare system, but they are also the centers of our communities. We expect great things from them, such as enhancing bioterrorism preparedness, implementing the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), hiring and retaining essential nursing staff, and above all providing timely, quality care to the patients they treat. What they expect from their government in return is fair reimbursement for the vital services they provide.

Our Medicare providers are facing very real and very serious circumstances, and we must answer them with serious solutions. Should Congress consider Medicare legislation this year, we urge you to support adequate reimbursement for the healthcare providers in our communities. We look forward to working with you to achieve this goal.

Sincerely,

Marion Berry, John Tanner, Max Sandlin, Mike Ross, David Phelps, Adam Schiff, Ellen O. Tauscher, Jim Turner, Charles W. Stenholm, Tim Holder, F. Allen Boyd, Jr., Dennis Moore, Collin Peterson, Gene Taylor, Bud Cramer, Joe Baca, Jim Matheson, Sanford Bishop, Jr., Chris John, Mike Thompson, Ronnie Shows, Mike McIntyre, Ken R. Lucus, Steve J. Israel, Jane Harman.

HONORING THE REVEREND DR. S.
HOWARD WOODSON, JR.

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call the attention of my colleagues to an effort taking place in central New Jersey today to honor one of our area's most noted spiritual and community leaders, the late Reverend Dr. S. Howard Woodson, Jr.

Today, in the City of Trenton, New Jersey, one of our community's busiest thoroughfares, Calhoun Street, is being renamed in honor of Dr. Woodson. It's an expression of thanks from a grateful community for over half a century of leadership and community involvement by this amazing man.

Reverend Woodson was a community leader in Trenton since 1946. As the respected pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, Dr. Woodson was also a noted leader in our nation's civil rights movement. As the Chairman of the Board of the Carver YMCA, Rev. Woodson fought to be granted independent status from the National YMCA, in order to desegregate that community institution. Later, as President of the State Conference of the NAACP, he convinced officials to convene the first state conference on housing discrimination. This conference raised awareness and led to many advances in housing rights for all in our community. Reverend Woodson's long and distinguished career has been marked by many firsts. He was the first individual of color elected as councilman-at-large in Trenton. He was also the first person of color to serve as Chairman of the Ranking Legislative Committee, Assistant Democratic Leader, and Speaker of the New Jersey State House.

In addition to being a respected and influential leader in community events, Reverend Woodson nurtured and helped grow the congregation of the Shiloh Baptist Church into one of the strongest, most committed and most spiritually vibrant churches in New Jersey. Through Reverend Woodson's leadership, the church erected a new center of worship and reached out to our community to clean up neighborhoods and bring people together for positive social change.

Today's honor is well deserved, and one of many earned by the late Dr. Woodson over his long and distinguished career. I take pride in joining with my colleagues in the House in marking this honor for an individual who meant so much to so many in central New Jersey.

FIBROMYALGIA AWARENESS DAY

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my support for the National Fibromyalgia Association and to recognize May 12, 2002 as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day. This year alone, over 10 million Americans will be diagnosed with Fibromyalgia, a disease of which there is no known cure.

Fibromyalgia is a chronic illness which causes fatigue and debilitating pain in women,

men and children of all ages and races. Patients with this illness often have to learn to live with widespread pain throughout their bodies; extreme fatigue; sleep disorders; stiffness and weakness; migraine headaches; numbness and tingling; impairment of memory and concentration.

As with many diseases of this type, medical professionals frequently are inadequately educated on Fibromyalgia diagnosis and treatment. What is worse, children and young adults with the disease not only suffer from the illness, but also from the lack of understanding and social acceptance. Others with the disease may be discriminated against at work, by friends or family. Developing a greater understanding of this disease will help guarantee hope for a better future for people with Fibromyalgia.

I am proud to recognize the needs of the National Fibromyalgia Association and to acknowledge May 12, 2002 as Fibromyalgia Awareness Day in Palm Beach Gardens. I urge all of our citizens to support the search for a cure and help those individuals and families who deal with this devastating disease on a daily basis.

HONORING SGT. KERRY
PORTERFIELD ON THE OCCASION
OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 8, 2002

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Senior Sergeant Kerry Porterfield as he retires from a thirty-one year career of exemplary service as an officer of the St. Helena Police Department.

As a native of St. Helena, I know first hand the impact that Kerry has had on our community while both on and off duty. As a police officer, his dedication to the pursuit of justice is admirable. With over 2,000 hours of law enforcement classes and 60,000 hours of experience under his belt, Kerry has a wealth of experience and know-how that will be sorely missed. A self-taught computer guru and driving force behind the adoption of new law enforcement technologies, he has helped make the St. Helena Police Department the modern and effective institution it is today. This year, with crime at a five-year low, Kerry has been honored as "Officer of the Year."

A devoted family man, Kerry and his wife, Dianne, have two daughters, Jennifer and Kareese. Once named "Father of the Year" by his daughter Kareese's pre-school, Kerry loves to spend time with his daughters, and was very involved in their school age activities.

After attending Napa High School, Kerry went to Napa Valley Junior College where he discovered a fascination with law enforcement. Upon graduating with an associate's degree in Criminal Justice, Kerry became a patrolman with the St. Helena Police Department on December 1, 1970.

As the son of Virginia and Cliff Porterfield, both Navy veterans, Kerry is a devoted fan of the Blue Angels, and often travels to see them.

Mr. Speaker, Sergeant Kerry Porterfield has served the people of the St. Helena, California with both enthusiasm for his work and steadfast professionalism. He is an invaluable asset