

City. My obligations here in Washington caused me to miss the event, which I am told was a tremendous success.

It is only fitting that Dr. Humer be honored, in this, the permanent record of the greatest freely elected body on earth, for his steadfast leadership in providing long term support he and Hoffmann-La Roche have given to South Africa's neediest citizens.

The Phelophepa Health Care Train, a South African charity, provides remote primary health care to rural South Africa via locomotive train. Now in its 9th year of operation, the Phelophepa Train continues reaching out and striving to better the lives of thousands of rural people by bringing basic health services, outreach programs, AIDS education, and training and health information to areas where such services are not available.

Under the exceptional leadership of Dr. Humer, Hoffmann-La Roche's generous assistance has enabled the Phelophepa Train to achieve unprecedented success in its efforts to provide essential health care to the people of South Africa. Dr. Humer and Hoffmann-La Roche deserve recognition for their efforts to better the lives of desperately needy persons halfway across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join our colleagues, Hoffman-La Roche, the people of South Africa, and me in recognizing the outstanding humanitarian efforts of Dr. Franz Humer, and congratulating him on this great honor.

TRIBUTE TO FELLOWSHIP CHAPEL

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize Fellowship Chapel, which celebrated its 36h Anniversary on Sunday, June 2, 2002. Truly a milestone occasion, this celebration gives testament to the outstanding dedication and commitment of the entire church and community.

Founded in 1966, Fellowship Chapel began humbly, with worship services and holiday celebrations for its members. Decades later, Fellowship Chapel has come far, recently celebrating the ground-breaking ceremony of its beautiful, new church complex in January of 2002. Fellowship Chapel has truly led this community in spirituality and services, opening its doors to welcome members and their families for generations.

Through much prayer, sacrifice, and hard work, the congregation of Fellowship Chapel has only grown stronger and more dedicated to its mission. With a variety of ministries and departments for religious education, charitable programs, social events and activities for the entire family, Fellowship Chapel is truly advancing in its mission to reach out into the community and bring families together. With the new construction underway, religious education, church activities, and official services will only become greater and this community will continue to succeed in its crusade to improve the lives of people through faith and God.

Although history and time have changed the congregation, the spirit of the church has remained strong. I would like to personally con-

gratulate Fellowship Chapel on their 36th Anniversary, and I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing them on this landmark occasion.

WELFARE REAUTHORIZATION AND CHARITABLE CHOICE

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I believe that we have a responsibility to continue to review and revise legislation that adapts and improves upon program successes and the ever-changing needs of American citizens. That is why I support H.R. 4737, the Personal Responsibility, Work, and Family Promotion Act of 2002. This legislation reauthorizes the 1996 welfare reform program, a program that works to move welfare recipients from the dependency of these programs to self-sufficiency.

However, while I support this welfare reauthorization, I do not support a provision included in the original 1996 legislation and again included in this reauthorization. This provision is known as Charitable Choice, and in my opinion, the wrong solution to a real problem. Under current law, faith-based groups may already accept federal dollars under three conditions: they cannot be pervasively sectarian, they cannot proselytize, and they cannot discriminate on the basis of religion in their employment practices.

Charitable Choice changes those conditions. Charitable Choice makes it possible for the government to subsidize churches and other thoroughly religious entities that provide social services. This proposal will provide tax dollars to religious groups and open the door to government review of church activities.

For many years the law has permitted groups that are affiliated with religious bodies (e.g. Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, Jewish Federations) to receive tax funds to provide secular social services. But Charitable Choice represents a radical and misguided revision of the law. Indeed, many ministers believe that Charitable Choice will do great harm to religion.

Because regulation always follows tax funds, Charitable Choice opens the door to invasive government monitoring, regulation and accounting of churches, clergy, and other leaders of the church. For these reasons, people like Freddy Garcia, who runs the highly successful Victory Fellowship ministry for drug addicts in San Antonio, has said, "I don't want any grants. I'm a church . . . All I want is for the government to leave me alone."

Also, because there is limited money in the public purse and thousands of religious groups in our country, Charitable Choice will force the government to pick and choose which religions it funds. Churches may have to compete for government grants before elected legislators. "The best way I know of to destroy religion is to have all the churches fighting over a big pot of money," says Rev. J. Brent Walker, general counsel of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs.

Charitable Choice will generate serious problems that have not been seen on a large scale in this country in over 200 years—out-

right religious infighting, intolerance and discrimination.

If we allow government to fund and become involved in religion, it will harm religion, not help it. It is people of faith who must point out that church-state separation does not mean keeping people of faith from being involved in government but rather it means keeping government from being involved in religion.

I will continue to work with my colleagues to provide a welfare program that helps the needs of all American citizens, without compromising religious freedom and liberty. I would hope that we, as Members of Congress, remember our obligations to uphold the principles of the Constitution and create legislation, which represents the core and steadfast beliefs of the United States.

IN SUPPORT OF THE HDTV TRANSITION

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 5, 2002

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of an exciting new technology. Local television broadcasters across the country are undertaking their biggest advancement in years: the transition to digital television. These stations aim to provide new services to their viewers, our constituents. Digital TV opens the door to new possibilities like High Definition TV, interactive television, and expanded programming options and choices.

The stations in Houston that serve my district are already transmitting digital signals. I am proud of my hometown broadcasters: the CBS affiliate KHOU, which is owned by the Texas based Belo Corporation; KPRC, owned by Post-Newsweek; KTRK, owned by ABC; KRIV and KTXH owned by FOX; KUHT; and my local PBS station. These local broadcasters are leading the charge into the future.

These TV stations are small businesses like any other. They have made substantial investments in new transmitting facilities, new production equipment, and in some cases new broadcast towers. Collectively, the broadcast industry has invested over a billion dollars in the future of free, over-the-air digital television.

The digital transition will accelerate significantly as more television sets with digital tuners are manufactured. Like any technology, digital television sets started out as expensive, but are rapidly becoming more affordable. The prices for digital television sets have dropped fifty percent in the last two years and continue dropping today. I look forward to a day when digital television tuners are so widespread that all consumers can afford to make the conversion and receive their local stations' free digital signals.

The transition to digital television will be, undoubtedly, a multi-step process. In the meantime, I am proud of my hometown stations for leading the way. Let me offer my thanks and congratulations to them for flipping the digital switch.