

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 17, 2002

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 1854) making appropriations for the legislative branch for the fiscal year ending September– 30, 1996, and for other purposes:

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Slaughter-Dicks-Horn-Johnson-Morella Amendment to increase funding for the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. The arts and humanities are important both socially and economically to our nation as a whole.

Studies have shown students benefit from exposure to both the arts and humanities. They gain not only a better cultural appreciation but are able to translate their positive experiences into skills that are essential for their academic future and their future in the American workforce.

Arts and humanities funding are increasingly allocated to state agencies for grant programs that reach out to underprivileged and smaller suburban and rural areas that do not have the benefits of big city art programs. In correlation, seventy-nine percent of businesses believe it is important to have an active cultural community in the locale in which they operate. Businesses in Delaware work hand in hand with the arts and humanities communities. This partnership makes my state a stronger community than it otherwise would be.

I have witnessed in Delaware firsthand how rewarding arts and humanities programs can be to our nation's youth. For example, the Possum Point Players in Georgetown, Delaware, is funded through the NEA's Challenge America Program. This organization provides positive alternatives for youth in Sussex County high schools through the creation of theater programs for rural and low-income students. Many of these students would not have the opportunity to participate in such programs without the Challenge America Program. These students have a better chance to increase their SAT scores, develop increased self-confidence, and are more likely to create multiple solutions to problems and work collaboratively with one another.

Furthermore, the Delaware Humanities Forum, through NEH funding, has played an essential role in bringing humanities to all corners of the state with programs available for schools, businesses, and other community groups. Each year the Humanities Forum presents an annual living history event bringing education and entertainment together. Past events have centered around the old west and the gilded age in American history.

It is important for us to remember, the collective benefits gained by not only our districts but also by the nation as a whole and that is why I rise today in strong support of increased funding for the NEA and the NEH.

TRIBUTE TO MIKE BENNETT

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise today to express gratitude and pay tribute to one of Colorado's outstanding public servants, Mike Bennett, who is stepping down this month as Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator WAYNE ALLARD. Mike is a true professional who has performed his duties with the highest degree of excellence. His leadership in Washington on behalf of Colorado will be greatly missed but always appreciated.

Over the past 11 years, Mike Bennett has served our country with distinction, carrying out both his personal and professional life with dignity, respect and dedication. Beginning first as then-Congressman ALLARD's District Director, Mike later served as Senator ALLARD's Administrative Assistant until his promotion to Chief of Staff in 1999.

Prior to his public service, Mike Bennett was President of First National Bank of Brighton, Colorado, and the Valley Bank of Lyons. Mike served as a member of the Board of Directors of Valley Bank of Brighton from 1984 to 1996. His banking career from 1977 to 1990 also included positions at the Farmers State Bank of Yuma, the Byers State Bank, and Valley Bank of Frederick.

A constituent of the Fourth Congressional District in Colorado, Mike Bennett not only makes his community proud but also his state and country. He has taken the responsibilities and standards of his job to a higher level, and I applaud him now before the House. On behalf of the citizens of Colorado, I ask the House to join me in extending congratulations to Mike Bennett for his commendable accomplishments.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO DEAN
DOWSON

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to take this opportunity to recognize Dean Dowson of Lakewood Colorado, for his accomplishments and achievements towards the betterment of his community. Dean has contributed greatly to the city of Lakewood, Colorado and is well known as a pillar of the Lakewood business community.

In May of 2002 Dean was awarded the "Minuteman Award" from the American International Automobile Dealers Association (AIADA), for outstanding political and legislative involvement. He has actively involved himself with Members of Congress, and has pioneered many efforts of the AIADA. Dean has exhibited an unparalleled commitment to his work and has become a pivotal part of the AIADA, aiding an organization that uplifts and reinforces the economy. He has truly excelled in many facets of his job, and continues to improve.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to stand this evening and honor Dean Dowson before this body of Congress and this nation. Thank you Dean for every minute of time you selflessly spent building a strong foundation in our community. Congratulations on your award and good luck in your future endeavors!

TRIBUTE TO ALEX REZA

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2002

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a good friend and an outstanding educator, Alex Reza. In May 2002, Alex retired after 34 years of service with the Los Angeles Unified School System.

Alex was one of the founders of the Mexican-American Studies curriculum at San Fernando High School where he has taught since 1968. He has a unique ability to clearly communicate history and make it relevant and understandable generation after generation. Known for his infectious passion when it comes to civil rights, Alex has made it a priority to ensure that his students learned about civil rights and labor leaders such as Cesar Chavez, Martin Luther King, and Walter Reuther.

A charismatic leader, Alex always manages to enlist numerous faculty, students and community members in his many initiatives and projects. His accomplishments and successes are legion. He helped found the Cesar Chavez March, co-sponsored the San Fernando High School chapter of MEChA (a national Chicano organization), and volunteered in the fund raising campaign for the Cesar Chavez Memorial. In recognition of his service to his community, Alex received the first Cesar Chavez Service Award in the City of San Fernando.

Alex's integrity, enthusiasm and strong consensus building abilities have made him a role model to many and an inspiration to many more. Over the years I have witnessed firsthand Alex's genuine concern for youth and their surrounding communities. I have met many of his former students whose interest in history, government and politics were inspired by his enthusiasm. In fact, three of those students now serve on my staff.

Lawyers, doctors, activists and leaders, including the President of the Los Angeles City Council, proudly count themselves as alumni of Alex Reza's classroom. Alex has created a living legacy through his students and in turn, he has earned the respect of his colleagues and his community.

Over the years, even though I never had the privilege of being a student in Alex's class, I've grown to trust his advice and counsel. In 2000, I designated him as my elector in the Presidential primary. He represented me well, and served with enthusiasm and professionalism.

Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct pleasure to ask my colleagues to join me in saluting my good friend, Alex Reza, for his extraordinary service to the hundreds of students he has inspired in his distinguished career.