

Shutting down Selective Service will give taxpayers a break without adversely affecting military efforts. Shutting down Selective Service will also end a program that violates the very principals of individual liberty our nation was founded upon. The moral case against the draft was eloquently expressed by former President Ronald Reagan in the publication *Human Events* in 1979: “. . . it [conscription] rests on the assumption that your kids belong to the state. If we buy that assumption then it is for the state—not for parents, the community, the religious institutions or teachers—to decide who shall have what values and who shall do what work, when, where and how in our society. That assumption isn't a new one. The Nazis thought it was a great idea.”

I hope all my colleagues join me in working to shut down this un-American relic of a bygone era and help realize the financial savings and the gains to individual liberties that can be achieved by ending Selective Service registration.

HONORING JESSICA HUGHES

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the outstanding achievements of Jessica Hughes, an individual who has overcome her physical disabilities and has become an inspiration to all with whom she comes in contact.

Jessica Hughes, a determined 16-year-old from Idalou, Texas, was born with cerebral palsy, is visually impaired, and is confined to a wheelchair, but does not let her disabilities slow her down. She actively participates in State and local stock shows, in which she proudly shows lambs. She has been showing lambs since she was in the third grade and has won several ribbons at fairs in Lubbock.

At her home, she trains and exercises the lambs every day, sometimes with the assistance of her father. Although she lacks the physical strength to lift the lambs, as many of the children showing them do, she has overcome that barrier with a modification to her motorized wheelchair. All who witness her compete in these shows cannot help but be encouraged by her indomitable spirit.

I would like to call the attention of my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to the achievements of this remarkable young lady. Jessica Hughes is indeed an inspiration to all and a fine role model for young people.

HELP SENIORS LOSING HMO
COVERAGE

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, in the last Congress, the House passed the landmark Israel-Johnson Medicare+Choice Improvement and Stabilization Act that I cowrote with Republican Representative NANCY JOHNSON. Unfortunately, despite a bipartisan consensus that something must be done and the best efforts

of Senator SCHUMER, the Senate did not pass the needed legislation.

Now, at the beginning of the 108th Congress, and working closely with the administration, leadership of both parties and the Senate, the first piece of legislation I have introduced in the 108th Congress is a bill that will help stabilize the Medicare+Choice program.

Since 1999 more than 2.4 million beneficiaries, including more than 85,000 Long Island seniors, have had their service interrupted by a severe funding crisis. Millions of other beneficiaries have experienced a reduction in benefits or an increase in out-of-pocket costs. These problems are a direct result of the fact that funding for the Medicare+Choice program has not kept up with rising health costs.

From the moment I came to Congress, seniors have been asking me when relief will arrive. They wonder what is taking so long and why Congress can't pass this and the President sign-it. The fact is that while Congress blames HMOs for leaving Long Island, HMOs blame the administration, and Republicans and Democrats blame each other, seniors are suffering.

As we begin a new session of Congress, it is essential that we put partisan politics aside and give seniors the help they so desperately need. Playing the blame game won't help seniors pay their medicine bills. The time has come to act.

Over the past three years, there has been a growing consensus in Congress that the Balanced Budget Act (BBA) of 1997 has had the unintended effect of constricting the Medicare market as a whole, and Medicare+Choice health plans in particular. According to a November 2002 report by the Commonwealth Fund, the BBA is limiting M+C payment rates, while health care costs are increasing. As a result, beneficiaries looking to Medicare HMOs as an affordable supplemental insurance option are being asked to pay more for fewer benefits.

And that is only part of the problem. The ultimate result of this flawed system created by the BBA is that HMOs in the program have been deserting seniors on Long Island. Just 4 years ago 12 HMOs offered seniors health plans in Suffolk County; now only two remain. More than 85,000 Long Island seniors have been dropped by their HMOs. This is unacceptable.

It is for this reason that the Medicare+Choice Equity and Access Act is so essential. It will stabilize the program and provide critical funding. The situation is unconscionable. Our seniors are depending on us. I urge my colleagues to quickly pass this bill and correct the funding inadequacies in Medicare+Choice.

SOUTHEAST DISTRICT BAR ASSOCIATION AND LAWYER REFERRAL SERVICE

HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Southeast District Bar Association (SEDBA), the most prominent and largest legal association in the Southeast District of the Greater Los Angeles Area.

SEDBA is an innovative nonprofit community organization established in 1934, by a visionary group of attorneys who recognized the community's need for affordable and credible legal assistance. Through a diverse membership of over 200 lawyers, judges, and business people, SEDBA has been continually providing legal assistance to over 7000 members of the community each year. SEDBA's extensive network of prescreened attorneys, who specialize in a myriad of fields, continues to be a source of expert service to all sectors of the community. In connection with local schools, SEDBA has organized "Law Day" to give students a better understanding of the judicial system. In addition, SEDBA works with local law enforcement agencies to collect holiday gifts for the less fortunate.

This year, I am also proud to recognize Ms. Rose Marie Gallegos, SEDBA's first Latina President and third woman to head the organization.

For SEDBA's dedication to service and commitment to the community, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing this remarkable organization.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
MITCH GEISLER, MAYOR OF
MARSHALL, MO

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that a remarkable public servant, the Honorable Mitch Geisler, Mayor of Marshall, MO, will not seek reelection in 2003, after 12 years of valuable service to the citizens of Marshall.

After high school, Mayor Geisler served his country through his tenure with the United States Army during World War II. He returned to Marshall, MO, and attended classes at Missouri Valley College while working with the Marshall Police Department. At the age of 23, Mayor Geisler was selected to serve as the Marshall Chief of Police. He was then selected to serve Garden City, KS, in the same position. Mayor Geisler again returned to his home town of Marshall and dedicated 27 years of service to the Wood & Huston Bank of Marshall. He retired as the bank's Senior Vice President.

In addition to these accomplishments, Mayor Geisler has served his state and community in many different capacities. He was elected twice to serve as the President of the Western Missouri National Academy Associates. He also was a four year chairman of the State Land Reclamation Commission. Mayor Geisler also served as the President of the Marshall Chamber of Commerce and was the President of the Missouri Chief's of Police Association. He was the District Chairman of the Santa Fe Council, Boy Scouts of America, and served on the Lake Ozark Council's Board of Directors. He also is a 50 year member of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. In this capacity, he flew with the Blue Angels Navy Acrobatic and demonstration team and also had the chance to fly off the USS *Theodore Roosevelt*. He was also invited by J. Edgar Hoover to attend the FBI Law Enforcement Institution.