

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS MARCH 11, 2003

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of men and women in Northern Virginia. Several members of the Fairfax County Police Department were honored at the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce's 25th Annual Valor Awards. Each year, the Chamber recognizes individuals who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to public safety. These outstanding men and women have played an intricate role in building a better community. This hard work and determination has earned several members of the Fairfax County Police Department the highest honor that Fairfax County bestows upon its public safety officials—The Valor Award.

There are several Valor Awards that a public safety officer can be given, Lifesaving Award, a Certificate of Valor, or a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medal of Valor. During the 25th Annual Awards Ceremony, 88 men and women from the Office of the Sheriff, Fire and Rescue Department, and Police Department received one of the aforementioned honors for their bravery and heroism.

It is with great honor that I enter into the RECORD the names of the recipients of the 2003 Valor Award in the Fairfax County Police Department. Receiving the *Lifesaving Award*: Public Service Communicator III Lorraine Fells-Danzer, Lieutenant Amy Lubas, Police Officer First Class Michael Grinnan, Police Officer First Class Jason Riechel, Police Officer First Class Andrew Pytko, Lieutenant Erin Schaible, Police Officer First Class Richard Theal; *Certificate of Valor*: Police Officer First Class Dale Clark, Police Officer First Class John Hartle, Officer Lee Redenbo, Master Police Officer John Flinn, Master Police Officer Peter Masood, Police Officer Steve Mihelarakis, Sergeant Robin Davis, Officer Michael Comer, Second Lieutenant Thomas Vaclavicek, Master Police Officer John Brocco, Lieutenant Mark Rogers, Second Lieutenant John Naylor, Police Officer First Class Peter Kwak, Police Officer First Class Charles Wolfert, Police Officer First Class Mike Kazlk, Officer Angela Griffiths, Officer Kyle Kunstel, Officer Daniel Lauta, PSCA III Scott Pierpoint, PSCA I Maile Jones; *Silver Medal of Valor*: Lieutenant Timothy Hoover, Second Lieutenant Christopher Cochran, Sergeant Brian Hall, Master Police Officer Michael Twomey, Police Officer First Class Ron Estrella, Sergeant Kevin Andariese, Police Officer First Class Richard Mattison, Police Officer First Class Donald Kline, Police Officer First Class Mark Dale, Police Officer First Class Edward Warren, Police Officer First Class Chad Mahoney, Police Officer First Class Steven Carroll, Po-

lice Officer First Class Donnacha Fay, Police Officer First Class Tom Hulse IV, Officer Melissa Jones, Officer Jonathan Bobel, Master Police Officer John Bracco, Police Officer First Class Bradford Avery; *Bronze Medal of Valor*: Officer Joseph Wallace, Police Officer First Class Katherin Luppino, Police Officer First Class Kin Vanderveld, Sergeant James Cox, Lieutenant Tor Bennett, Police Officer First Class Michael Gibbons, Police Officer First Class Holly Hinkle.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve the Fairfax County Police Department. The events of September 11th served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us every day. Their constant efforts on behalf of Fairfax County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law and order throughout our neighborhoods, and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating this group of extraordinary citizens.

HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA
ON TIBETAN UPRISING DAY

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I request the attached copy of the annual statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama marking March 10, 2003 as the 44th anniversary of the Tibetan Uprising of 1959 be included in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

On March 10, 1959, the people of the Tibetan capitol of Lhasa surrounded the summer home of the Dalai Lama in a brave effort to protect him from the Peoples' Liberation Army's guns that were trained on his compound from across the river. These heroic Tibetans refused to leave even after the Chinese artillery fire began falling. The Dalai Lama eventually fled into exile in a futile effort to protect them; thousands died during the Chinese assault on the city, and thousands more died as the PLA moved to suppress a nationwide uprising against their increasingly repressive occupation of Tibet.

Under the leadership of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Tibetan people inside and outside Tibet continue their non-violent struggle to preserve their unique cultural, linguistic and religious heritage. I am proud that the U.S. Congress is a beacon of support for the Tibetan struggle. I hope that His Holiness' statement will inspire all of us to re-double our efforts in support of a peaceful resolution to this tragic situation. As the lead sponsor of the Tibetan Policy Act, I was pleased to see the Congress come together last year in support of a dynamic U.S. policy on Tibet. This year, as we implement this landmark legislation, we must continue our historic support for a movement that embodies the values of our nation and

our time: freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from tyranny, equality, liberty, self-determination, and democratic self-government.

MARCH 10TH STATEMENT

Our sincere greetings to our fellow Tibetans in Tibet and in exile and to our friends and supporters all over the world on the occasion of the 44th anniversary of the Tibetan People's Uprising of 1959. While there were positive developments on the overall issue of Tibet, we remain concerned about the continuing marginalization of Tibetans in their own country and Chinese actions on the human rights and religious freedom of the Tibetan people in the past year.

The 16th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party ushered a new era in China by smoothly transferring the leadership from the third to the fourth generation. This is a sign of political maturity and adaptability. The reforms, initiated by Deng Xiaoping and continued under President Jiang Zemin, have brought about great changes in China, especially in the fields of economy, trade and in the conduct of international relations. I welcome this development since I have always drawn attention to the need to bring China into the mainstream of the world community and have spoken against any idea of isolating and containing China. Unfortunately, in sharp contrast to these positive aspects, such a pragmatic and flexible approach has been lacking when it comes to upholding the basic civil and political rights and freedoms of its citizens, especially with regard to those of the so-called minorities within the People's Republic of China.

We were encouraged by the release of several Tibetan and Chinese political prisoners of conscience during the past year. Among them Tibetan prisoners such as Takna Jigme Sangpo and Ani Ngawang Sangdrol who spent years in prison solely for daring to express their views on Chinese policies in Tibet and in particular on Tibetan history and who represent the courage and determination of the Tibetan people inside Tibet.

I was pleased that the Chinese government made it possible for my envoys to visit Beijing to re-establish direct contact with the Chinese leadership and to also visit Tibet to interact with the leading local Tibetan officials. The visit of my envoys last September to Beijing provided the opportunities to explain to the Chinese leadership our views on the issue of Tibet. I was encouraged that the exchanges of views were friendly and meaningful.

I had instructed my envoys to make every effort to pursue a course of dialogue with the leadership in Beijing and to seize every opportunity to dispel existing misunderstandings and misconceptions in Beijing about our views and positions. This is the only sensible, intelligent and human way to resolve differences and establish understanding. It will not be an easy task nor can it be accomplished within a short period of time. However, it provides the Tibetan and Chinese peoples a unique and crucial opportunity to put behind them decades of bitterness, distrust and resentment and to form a new relationship based on equality, friendship and mutual benefit.

Successive Chinese leaders have acknowledged and promised to respect with understanding and tolerance Tibet's distinct culture, history and identity. In reality, whenever Tibetans demonstrate allegiance and

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

concern for their own people the Chinese authorities resort to their usual "policy of merciless repression", whereby they are labelled as "splittists" and as a result arrested and imprisoned. They have no opportunity to speak out the truth. The recent execution of Lobsang Dhondup and the death sentence given to Tulku Tenzin Delek without due process of law are clear examples of this policy, which cannot resolve the problem and therefore must be changed.

It is my sincere hope that the Chinese leadership will find the courage, vision and wisdom for new openings to solve the Tibetan issue through dialogue. Looking around the world we cannot fail to notice how unattended conflicts with ethnic roots can erupt in ways that make them extremely difficult to solve. It is, therefore, in the interest of the People's Republic of China to address such issues. A new creative initiative to resolve the issue of Tibet would serve as a very convincing sign that China is changing, maturing and becoming more receptive to assuming a greater role on the global stage as a reliable and forward-looking power. A constructive approach to the issue of Tibet provides important opportunities to create a political climate of trust, confidence and openness, both domestically and internationally. Such an expression of Chinese leadership during this time of deep anxiety over international conflicts, terrorism and ethnic strife in the world will go a long way to impressing and reassuring the world.

It is necessary to recognize that the Tibetan freedom struggle is not about my personal position or well being. As early as in 1969 I made it clear that it is up to the Tibetan people to decide whether the centuries-old institution of the Dalai Lama should continue or not. In 1992 in a formal announcement I stated clearly that when we return to Tibet with a certain degree of freedom, I would not hold any office in the Tibetan government nor any other political position. However, as I often state, till my last day I will remain committed to the promotion of human values and religious harmony. I also announced then that the Tibetan Administration-in-Exile should be dissolved and that the Tibetans in Tibet must shoulder the main responsibility of running the Tibetan government. I have always believed that in the future Tibet should follow a secular and democratic system of governance. It is, therefore, baseless to allege that our efforts are aimed at the restoration of Tibet's old social system. No Tibetan, whether in exile or in Tibet, has any desire to restore old Tibet's outdated social order. On the contrary, the democratisation of the Tibetan community started soon upon our arrival in exile. This culminated in the direct election of our political leadership in 2001. We are committed to continue to take vigorous actions to further promote democratic values among the ordinary Tibetans.

As far back as the early seventies in consultation with senior Tibetan officials I made a decision to seek a solution to the Tibetan problem through a "Middle Way Approach". This framework does not call for independence and separation of Tibet. At the same time it provides genuine autonomy for the six million men and women who consider themselves Tibetans to preserve their distinctive identity, to promote their religious and cultural heritage that is based on a centuries-old philosophy which is of benefit even in the 21st century, and to protect the delicate environment of the Tibetan plateau. This approach will contribute to the overall stability and unity of the People's Republic of China. I remain committed to this realistic and pragmatic approach and will continue to make every effort to reach a mutually acceptable solution.

The reality today is that we are all interdependent and we have to co-exist on this small planet. Therefore, the only sensible and intelligent way of resolving differences, whether between individuals, peoples or nations, is through a political culture of non-violence and dialogue. Since our struggle is based on truth, justice and non-violence and is not directed against China, we have been fortunate to receive increasing worldwide sympathy and support, including from amongst the Chinese. I express my appreciation and gratitude for this consistent solidarity. I would also like to express once again on behalf of the Tibetans our appreciation and immense gratitude to the people and the Government of India for their unwavering and unmatched generosity and support.

With my homage to the brave men and women of Tibet who have died for the cause of our freedom, I pray for an early end to the suffering of our people.

THE DALAI LAMA.

HOUSE RESOLUTION 342, THE MOSQUITO ABATEMENT FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in great support of H.R. 342, the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act.

Mr. Speaker, mosquito borne-diseases are increasingly plaguing the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), last year alone there were more than 5,000 people infected with mosquito borne-illnesses such as Dengue Fever and the West Nile virus.

As a member of Congress, I am greatly concerned with the West Nile virus's rapid spread nationwide. Out of my concern for the victims of West Nile virus and other mosquito borne diseases, I not only cosigned legislation and letters seeking grants and research dollars to combat this deadly virus, but I also wrote a letter to Dr. Julie Gerderding, the CDC's director. In the letter, I expressed the importance of the CDC, the NIH, and Congress to work cooperatively to communicate the concerns and resolutions in combating these deadly viruses.

Considering West Nile virus is prevalent during the summer and early fall, it is imperative that the necessary steps are taken in the virus's prevention and vaccination before the onset of the next summer season. Mr. Speaker, I believe H.R. 342, the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health (MASH) Act, would do exactly that.

Essentially, H.R. 342 would establish two temporary grant programs to help state and local governments assess mosquito problems, and coordinate and operate mosquito control programs. This measure would also authorize \$100 million in FY2003, and such sums as necessary each subsequent year through FY 2007, for these grants.

While Florida was not as severely affected as Illinois or Michigan last year by the West Nile virus, Florida certainly has the propensity to be dramatically affected by this virus due to its annual warm climate. The increasing growth of outbreaks and spread of West Nile

virus each year qualifies it as a public health threat that is likely to be with us for years to come. Addressing the problem now through H.R. 342 will provide benefits in the future, and most importantly save lives.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the M.A.S.H Act.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MOURNING DOVE HARVEST ACT

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise before the House today to reintroduce the Mourning Dove Harvest Act, a bill that will give individuals who reside in all states a fair and equal opportunity to hunt mourning doves.

Hunters in states north of the 37th parallel often find that mourning doves already have migrated south for the winter by the time hunting season opens on September 1st. It is not uncommon for the fall hunting season to last less than one week or even one day in such northern states as Idaho, Montana and Washington. Many sportsmen unable to follow this migration are left without a hunting opportunity. States south of the 37th parallel, meanwhile, have a full season and ample opportunity to harvest these birds. Hunters in Mexico have the additional advantage of no harvest limits. Passage of this bill is the first step toward creating a season that will give residents of northern states an equal opportunity.

The designated hunting season for mourning doves that begins September 1st and ends March 10th is the result of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, which in turn stems from the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916. The Treaty signed by the United States, Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Japan and Russia covers a multitude of migratory birds, including mourning doves. There is little legislative history justifying the selection of this fall opening date, and migration routes, hunting practices and conservation efforts have changed significantly in the 86 years since the Treaty's ratification. The last week in August has been identified as a period when these birds are not nesting, but are preparing for their annual southern migration.

Passage of this bill will allow hunters in states north of the 37th parallel to hunt mourning doves seven days earlier—during a time when their migration south is about to begin. Hunters in the north will be on a more equal footing with their counterparts in the south.

Scientists have found that regulated hunting has no significant effect on the mourning dove population.

This legislation amends the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and asks the Secretary of State to begin discussions with the signatories of the Migratory Bird Treaty to include this change in the Treaty.

It is important to note that (1) this legislation offers hunters in the north a more equal opportunity to harvest mourning doves; (2) the mourning dove is the most widely distributed and harvested game bird in North America; (3) in states north of the 37th parallel, mourning doves often begin their southern migration prior to September 1st, the opening day of the hunting season; (4) this change will not impact the mourning dove population.

After exhaustive studies, analysis and discussion of this issue, the time to pass this measure is now. In the name of equitable access to this resource, I urge the passage of this bill.

RECOGNIZING THE FAIRFAX COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 2003 VALOR AWARD RECIPIENTS

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary group of men and women in Northern Virginia. Each year, the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce, along with the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, recognizes public safety officials who have courageously demonstrated selfless dedication to public safety. These individuals are honored with the highest honor that Fairfax County bestows upon its public safety officials—The Valor Award.

There are several Valor Awards that a public safety officer can be given: The Lifesaving Award, a Certificate of Valor, or a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medal of Valor. During the 25th Annual Awards Ceremony, 88 men and women from the Office of the Sheriff, Fire and Rescue Department, and Police Department received one of the aforementioned honors for their bravery and heroism.

It is with great honor that I enter into the RECORD the names of the recipients of the 2003 Valor Award in the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. Receiving the Lifesaving Award: Captain John Hart, Shift Supervisor Roy B. ShROUT III, Asst. Shift Supervisor Tammy Read, Psc.III Judith Lassiter, Psc.III Susan FARRIA, Psc.III Alicia Dale, Lieutenant Joseph Palau, Firefighter Juan C. Ayala, Technician Gregory W. Hunter, Technician David H. Gilmore, Technician Bryan J. Nix, and Technician James H. Williams; Certificate of Valor: Senior Building Inspector Michael A. Andreano, and Firefighter James M. Furman; Silver Medal of Valor: Lieutenant Wayne B. Stottleyer, and Technician Ronald S. Pifer; Bronze Medal of Valor: Master Technician John C. Mayers.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the men and women who serve the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The events of September 11th served as a reminder of the sacrifices our emergency service workers make for us everyday. Their constant efforts on behalf of Fairfax County citizens are paramount to preserving security, law and order throughout our neighborhoods, and their individual and collective acts of heroism deserve our highest praise. I ask that my colleagues join me in congratulating this group of extraordinary citizens.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE Rx DRUG BENEFIT AND DISCOUNT ACT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to introduce the Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act with JOHN DINGELL, the Dean of the House and Ranking Member of the Energy and Commerce Committee. Our Ranking Member on the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee, PETE STARK, has had a leadership role in the development of this legislation, as have so many other health care leaders in our caucus.

This legislation makes good on our promise to add affordable, comprehensive prescription drug coverage to Medicare.

The Democratic bill will look, smell, taste, and feel like any other Medicare benefit, because it is a Medicare benefit. Beneficiaries will not be forced to join an HMO or other private insurer to get the prescription drugs they need.

Under this legislation, every beneficiary will be guaranteed a \$25 monthly premium, \$100 annual deductible, 20 percent coinsurance and \$2000 out-of-pocket limit, no matter where they live.

We provide additional assistance for low-income beneficiaries. Those with incomes up to 150 percent of the poverty level (\$13,470 for one person) will pay nothing.

Those with incomes between 150–175 percent of poverty (\$13,470–\$15,715 for a single person) will pay premiums on a sliding scale with no additional cost-sharing.

The Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act would: lower prescription drug costs for all Americans, regardless of whether they are covered by Medicare, give all Medicare beneficiaries the option of a reasonably-priced guaranteed prescription benefit under Medicare, and ensure that senior citizens and people with disabilities receive coverage for the drug their doctor prescribes and not some substitute that an insurance company deems “equivalent.”

Unlike the President’s and other Republicans’ proposal, our plan would never force seniors into an HMO or similar private plan in order to get a prescription drug benefit.

Republicans claim they will give seniors a “Medicare” prescription drug benefit, but their proposals are really just a way to provide subsidies to insurance plans and HMOs, not to help beneficiaries.

Republicans claim they will give beneficiaries choices, but their proposals really leave virtually all of the important decisions to the private insurance companies. Under the GOP plan, private insurers will decide which drugs are covered and which are not. If your drug is not on the list, too bad. Millions of seniors will not be able to afford their prescriptions under the GOP plan. Under the GOP plan, private insurers can pick and choose which pharmacies to include in their networks. If your neighborhood pharmacy is not on the preferred list, you are out of luck.

The bottom line is that those who can buy insurance under the GOP plan may find their choice of pharmacies severely limited or that they cannot get coverage for the drugs prescribed by their doctor.

Ultimately, there is only one choice the President and other Republicans want to force seniors to make—the choice of either their family doctor or their life-saving medicines. Under the GOP plan, seniors in search of even modest drug benefits would have to leave the traditional Medicare program—where they have the choice of any doctor they want—and join an HMO or other private insurer that may or may not cover their family doctor.

Many HMOs and private insurers have unfairly limited health care in the past. That’s what the Patients’ Bill of Rights debate has been about. They’ve been unreliable partners in Medicare to date; just look at the problems in the Medicare+Choice program. And now the Republicans want to put them in charge of this medication benefit under their “privatization” model.

Republican leaders have never liked Medicare. Former Speaker Gingrich once said Medicare would “wither on the vine because we think people are voluntarily going to leave it.” In 1995, Dick Armey called Medicare: “a program I would have no part of in a free world.”

Republican proposals lay the groundwork for them to make good on their desire to do away with the program. The Republican prescription drug plan is the first step towards privatizing Medicare. They would force seniors to deal with private insurance companies instead of having the choice of getting prescriptions through Medicare. They would also institute so-called “modernizations” that would significantly raise the premiums of beneficiaries who wish to stay in the traditional Medicare program.

In contrast, we base our plan—not on a flawed privatization model—but on the successful Medicare program. We offer a genuine Medicare plan, providing affordable voluntary drug coverage to all American seniors through Medicare.

Under this legislation, no senior will ever have to choose between putting food on the table or paying the rent or getting the medicines they need.

This legislation also helps reduce the skyrocketing costs that seniors and other beneficiaries currently pay for prescription drugs by utilizing the collective negotiating power of Medicare’s 40 million beneficiaries to guarantee lower drug prices. By closing some loopholes in current law that prevent or delay generic drugs from coming to market, this legislation also reduces drug prices for all Americans.

While our Republican colleagues are engaged in a cynical political exercise designed to bring themselves political cover, we offer serious legislation. It would bring senior citizens Medicare prescription drug coverage.

When President Harry Truman first proposed Medicare in his second term, a wide array of Republican forces were against him saying he could not do it. Truman said: “We may not make it [now], but someday we will.” Eventually, Truman and other Medicare advocates succeeded. Harry and Bess Truman became the first Medicare enrollees in 1965.

The Republican leadership may prevent us from passing a true Medicare prescription drug benefit now, but they cannot stop us in the long run because that is what seniors and all Americans have said they really want.

As PETE STARK points out, prescription drug coverage is as essential to seniors’ good

health in the 21st century as coverage of doctor visits and hospital stays was in the 20th century.

If you want to see the real difference between Democrats and Republicans, look at Medicare prescription drug coverage. While Republicans protect the pharmaceutical industry's profits, Democrats protect seniors from skyrocketing prescription drug costs. I urge my colleagues to look at the fine print, and to vote for this legislation when the opportunity arises.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHILD
MEDICATION SAFETY ACT OF 2003

HON. MAX BURNS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce the Child Medication Safety Act of 2003. This legislation will address a significant problem facing children and their parents throughout the nation and provide parents with protections from being forced into making decisions about their child's health under duress.

Last year, the House Government Reform Committee held a hearing exploring an issue that should shock all of us. Witnesses at this hearing testified that some school officials have taken it upon themselves to decide that a child needs to be placed on psychotropic drugs. These school officials are not licensed medical practitioners, and yet they have felt comfortable telling parents that their child must be on a psychotropic drug or their child would not be allowed to attend school any longer.

This is unconscionable.

No parent should ever be coerced by a teacher or principal or other school official to place their child on a psychotropic drug. No child should ever face the denial of educational services only because they are not taking a psychotropic drug.

What are these psychotropic drugs? Ritalin, Adderall, and others are drugs that, when carefully prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner and carefully monitored in the administration, can help an individual with attention deficit disorder (ADD) or attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) control the symptoms of their disease so that they can function. These can be miracle drugs for many people, and when properly diagnosed and properly administered, many people benefit greatly from these drugs.

But psychotropic drugs also have a dark side. These drugs are listed on Schedule II of the Controlled Substances Act. Drugs are placed on Schedule II when: "(A) The drug or other substance has a high potential for abuse, (B) The drug or other substance has a currently accepted medical use in treatment in the United States or a currently accepted medical use with severe restrictions; or (C) Abuse of the drug or other substances may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence."

Why are parents being forced by some schools to place their child on a drug that "may lead to severe psychological or physical dependence?" These are drugs that have a high potential for abuse. These are drugs that the DEA says have a high diversion rate. This is unreal.

Teachers, principals, or other school personnel may mean well, and may think that they are doing the right thing, but most are not trained medical personnel and have absolutely no business forcing a parent to choose between their child's education and the potential harm of these drugs.

Now I do not want to demonize these drugs. When a licensed medical practitioner properly diagnoses a child as needing these drugs, the administration of these drugs may be entirely appropriate and very beneficial. But these decisions must be made without coercion or threat of the denial of education.

This Act has a simple message: states that take federal education funds must prevent school district personnel, teachers, principals, and other non-licensed medical professionals, from forcing a child to be on psychotropic drugs in order to attend school or receive services.

This is a common sense piece of legislation, and I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this bill.

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON
THE UNITED STATES POSTAL
SERVICE

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD a letter from the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) sent to Mr. Dennis Shea, Executive Director of the President's Commission on the United States Postal Service (Commission). The President's nine-member bipartisan Commission was established to identify the operational, structural, and financial challenges facing the Postal Service; examine potential solutions; and recommend legislative and administrative steps to ensure the long-term viability of postal service in the United States. The Commission will submit its report to the President by July 31, 2003.

The letter outlines concerns the CBC and many of its constituents have with issues before the Commission. The CBC believes that:

First, before we change the United States Postal Service to accommodate modern technologies (Internet, electronic transfers, electronic bill payments), it is important to bear in mind that millions of Americans do not have the access or ability to use these services, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, and older Americans;

Second, considering the possibility of the privatization of the United States Postal Service, it seems clear that small rural and inner city markets will not support private business, thus leading to a reduction in the level of services and the ability of people living in these markets to communicate; and

Lastly, drastic change to the structure of the United States Postal Service also has the potential of reducing employment opportunities for veterans (who enjoy preferential employment) and groups under-represented in private industry (women and people of color).

Thus, any effort to dismantle the United States Postal Service could serve to negatively impact those populations traditionally marginalized in our country. I urge the Com-

mission to look into the concerns outlined in the CBC's letter. I urge the President to carefully consider the Commission's recommendations in light of these concerns.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS,
Washington, DC, February 21, 2003.

Mr. DENNIS SHEA,
Executive Director, President's Commission on the U.S. Postal Service, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SHEA: On behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, we respectfully submit the following comments regarding the extremely important issues before the Commission on the United States Postal Service.

President Bush established the Commission on the United States Postal Service on the premise that modern telecommunications, the Internet, electronic transfers and electronic bill paying may justify or require changes in the Postal Service. However, millions of Americans, especially those who are economically disadvantaged and older Americans, do not have access to these means of communication. For them, the Postal Service continues to provide the only practical and available means of communication and commerce. Any change to the Postal Service that would affect the continued availability of universal mail service at uniform rates would threaten to further erode their economic security.

Some advocates of changes in the Postal Service also advocate privatization of the Postal Service. That movement, too, is based on the false premise that we may be able to dispense with the provision of universal service. For Americans in our rural areas and for many in our inner cities, a profit motive cannot support provision of essential services. This has always been and must remain the responsibility of our government. It is essential that there remain a universal postal system that spreads the cost of maintaining universal service among all those who use it. Any change that would favor the efficiency of private markets over the public interest in communications among all Americans would further isolate Americans who are already disadvantaged by economic circumstance or geographical location. We urge you not to support any policy that might permit that to happen.

We also want to caution against any change that would undermine the economic security of postal employees. In the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970, Congress recognized that employees of the former Post Office Department of the federal government were severely underpaid and labored in very unfavorable working conditions. In that Act, Congress improved postal wages and provided for free collective bargaining by unions representing postal employees. That system has worked very well. In the more than thirty years since Congress authorized the last wage increase for postal employees, postal wages have kept pace with inflation, and there has been no major work stoppage of the sort that disrupted postal services in 1970.

The Postal Service employs hundreds of thousands of women, African-Americans and other racial minorities. For many of these postal employees, the fact that the Postal Service provides a living wage and adequate fringe benefits, regardless of race or gender, has been critically important. This is in contrast to the private sector of our economy, where there remains an unfortunate disparity between the employment opportunities and compensation available to white males and the opportunities and compensation available to women and racial minorities. Therefore, any effort to dismantle the Postal Service would be a regressive step, contrary to our national effort to provide equal employment opportunities for women and racial minorities.

In the same vein, we are mindful of the large number of veterans employed by the Postal Service. Our promises and commitment to these veterans must not be forgotten or diminished. In their military service, and in their postal service, these veterans have served their country. It is necessary and appropriate that we continue to recognize their sacrifices by providing them preferential employment opportunities in government positions, including positions in the Postal Service.

Thank you for your careful consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS,
Chair, CBC.
DANNY K. DAVIS,
Ranking Member, Special Committee on Postal Services.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE Rx DRUG BENEFIT AND DISCOUNT ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, House Democrats answer the public's call for a real Medicare prescription drug benefit.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit and Discount Act is an entitlement that will guarantee affordable, comprehensive prescription drug coverage to all senior citizens and individuals with disabilities who are on Medicare.

The benefit in this legislation is simple. It has no gaps, and no gimmicks. Beneficiaries will pay a \$25 monthly premium, have a \$100 per year deductible, and pay 20 percent co-insurance up to a \$2000 out-of-pocket limit. After a beneficiary spends \$2000, Medicare pays for all other needed prescription drugs. Under this legislation, a beneficiary will never pay more than \$2000 for prescription drugs in a year, and most beneficiaries will pay far less.

This legislation provides additional assistance to those with lower incomes. Beneficiaries whose incomes are under 150 percent of poverty will pay no premiums and no cost-sharing. Those with incomes between 150–175 percent of poverty will receive premium subsidies on a sliding scale basis and pay no cost-sharing. Unlike the House-passed Republican bill from last year, there is no hidden hatchet to deny benefits to low-income seniors who have modest assets.

These Medicare benefits will be guaranteed for everyone on Medicare, regardless of where they live and regardless of whether they are in the traditional Medicare program or a private plan. No senior will be forced to leave Medicare for a private plan in order to receive meaningful prescription drug coverage.

This legislation also tackles one of the biggest problems facing seniors, the uninsured, and all Americans: astronomical prescription drug prices. This bill will reduce Medicare prescription drug costs by using the market clout of 40 million Medicare beneficiaries to negotiate lower prices. It will also reduce prescription drug costs for all Americans by closing loopholes in current law that allow pharmaceutical companies to game the patent system and prevent competition from equally effective, but lower cost, generic drugs.

The Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit and Discount Act will guarantee the choices that matter. Under our plan, Medicare will pay toward the cost of every prescription drug, not just those for which a private insurance company cut a special deal with a drug maker. Seniors will be covered for any drug their doctor prescribes. And, under our plan, every pharmacy that is willing to play by the rules will be welcome to participate. Seniors will be able to go to the pharmacy of their choice.

And, importantly, unlike the President's plan and the Congressional Republicans' plan, our plan will never force elderly or disabled Americans to give up traditional Medicare in order to get a prescription drug benefit. Beneficiaries will be free to choose between the traditional Medicare program and private plans. But it will be a real choice, not coerced through the lure of a more generous prescription drug benefit.

The prescription drug coverage in the Democratic bill will seem just like any other Medicare benefit, because it is a Medicare benefit.

Don't be fooled by Republican rhetoric. They like to talk about choices, but in the end their proposals all boll down to one choice for seniors—choose either the doctor you know and trust or the medicines you know you need. This is not a choice that anyone should have to make.

The Administration claims to offer seniors the same choices that Members of Congress and federal employees get through the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP). Again, this is nothing more than hyperbole. Almost all Members of Congress, and most federal employees, are in the Blue Cross Standard Option plan in FEHBP. That plan offers a drug benefit with no deductible, a 25 percent copayment, and a \$4000 cap on all medical spending per year. No Republican has come forth with a comparable Medicare prescription drug benefit. Our bill does just that.

The Republicans' goal is simple: they are using the promise of a prescription drug benefit to attempt to privatize Medicare. No matter how you measure it, beneficiaries will pay more and get less under the Republican plan. At the same time, they are doling out hundreds of billions of dollars in federal tax dollar giveaways to their friends in the insurance and pharmaceutical industries.

Our legislation will not be cheap. But none of us question the cost of covering doctor visits and hospital stays under Medicare today. I would argue that prescription drug coverage is as essential to good health care in the 21st century as physician and hospital care was in the 20th century when Medicare was created.

The President has committed \$400 billion to a Medicare drug benefit and so-called Medicare reform. On top of that, he's committed \$726 billion to an economic stimulus plan that includes dividend cuts and speeding up tax breaks for the very richest among us. No one believes that this tax cut will provide real economic stimulus. If he would simply reduce its size, we could rededicate those funds to improving Medicare. That is a much more important priority for our nation than more tax cuts for those who need them least.

Unfortunately, it is not the goal of Republicans to create an affordable, meaningful prescription drug benefit in Medicare that works for all our Medicare beneficiaries of today and tomorrow. Instead, their prescription drug pro-

posals are designed simply to provide political cover for the President and Republican Members of Congress—and to allow them to privatize Medicare so that the federal government's expenses are protected rather than protecting the expenses of seniors and people with disabilities.

Our bill meets the needs of the 40 million Americans who depend on Medicare. That's why the leading beneficiary organizations support this legislation. This is the drug benefit America's seniors and people with disabilities need and deserve. I urge my colleagues to join us in support of a real Medicare drug benefit by pushing for passage of the Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act this year.

IN OBSERVANCE OF TIBETAN UPRISING DAY

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Ms. PELOSI. Ms. Speaker, I rise in honor of Tibetan Uprising Day. Yesterday, Human Rights Watch reported that two Tibetan businessmen have been detained by Chinese authorities, apparently on suspicion of leaking information on the torture and trial of other Tibetan activists. It was an important reminder of the continued need to speak out against human rights abuses by the Chinese government. The following is my statement in observance of Tibetan Uprising Day that was read yesterday in Washington, D.C. and San Francisco:

Thank you to Bay Area Friends of Tibet and other Bay Area Tibet Support Groups for organizing this special observance of Tibetan Uprising Day. I am proud to represent a district where protecting human rights is a top priority.

Today we honor the courage and determination of those who stood against the Chinese Government's brutal oppression of the Tibetan People during the Lhasa Uprising 44 years ago. We also pay tribute to the thousands of Tibetans who have sacrificed and died opposing Chinese occupation, as well as all Tibetans who have suffered human rights abuses due to their religious, political or cultural beliefs or activities.

I am deeply concerned about the Chinese government's continued repression of the Tibetan people. The PRC continues to commit horrible human rights abuses, including instances of torture, arbitrary arrest, detention without public trial, and lengthy detention of Tibetan nationalists for peacefully expressing their political or religious views.

Two weeks ago, 78 of my colleagues in Congress and I wrote to Vice President Hu condemning the execution of Mr. Lobsang Dhondup. We also strongly urged him to commute the sentences of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche and Tserang Dondrup, and to release the others currently being held in connection with this case. These individuals were held incommunicado and suffered torture, and their trials were conducted under highly restrictive conditions and without counsel of their choosing.

The Chinese government denied all requests by the U.S. Consulate in Chengdu to observe these legal proceedings that reportedly did not meet United Nations' minimum standards of due process. Such abuses of judicial processes and disingenuous actions on

the part of the Chinese Government are not conducive to good U.S.-China relations.

The plight of the Tibetan people is a challenge to the global conscience. Because of our unique position in the world, the U.S. has a special opportunity and responsibility to promote the values of liberty, equality, and human rights that we hold dear. If the U.S. government is serious about helping the Tibetan people, it must promote negotiations between the government of China and His Holiness the Dalai Lama and make self-determination for Tibetans a priority in the U.S.-China relationship.

Thank you for your continued activism for the people of Tibet. Your actions, words and prayers will move mountains. Please be assured I will continue to support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to preserve their heritage and regain their freedom.

MOMENT OF QUIET REFLECTION
IN SCHOOLS ACT

HON. DAVID SCOTT

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to discuss legislation that I am introducing today that would establish a moment of quiet reflection in our public schools. I am pleased to be joined by Representatives MCINTYRE, TANNER, SHIMKUS, STENHOLM, LIPINSKI, FROST, LUCAS (KY), MEEK, PEARCE, ISAKSON, RENZI, BORDALLO, and BISHOP (GA) as cosponsors of my legislation.

My legislation will provide for a period of quiet reflection at the opening of school on every school day. In today's hectic society, all too few of the country's citizens are able to experience a moment of quiet reflection before plunging headlong into the day's activities. The country's young citizens are particularly affected by this absence of an opportunity for a moment of quiet reflection. Therefore, the nation's youth, and society as a whole, would be well served if students were afforded a moment of quiet reflection at the beginning of each day in the public schools.

In Georgia, I observed that after several killings on school campuses around the country, students came together to have a moment of quiet reflection. Noting that this moment of silence seemed to be beneficial and calming, I believe that providing students with an opportunity for quiet introspection at the beginning of each school day would help to combat violence among our students. Similar legislation in Georgia has been upheld by the United States Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit which ruled that a moment of quiet reflection does not violate the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.

On February 7, 2003, the U.S. Department of Education issued guidance on constitutionally protected prayer in public elementary and secondary schools. The Guidance on Constitutionally Protected Prayer in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools clarifies that as a condition of receiving Elementary and Secondary Education Act funds, state and local school agencies must certify that if a school has a "minute of silence" that students are free to pray silently, or not to pray, during

these periods of time. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation providing a moment of quiet reflection at the beginning of each school day.

HONORING MRS. ROSEMARY PACE

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the late Mrs. Rosemary Pace of Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Mrs. Pace passed away on March 5, 2003. Mrs. Pace was a community leader and an outstanding citizen.

Mrs. Pace was a native of Elmhurst, Illinois. She was born on November 14, 1914. Throughout her lifetime, she touched the lives of many with her civic involvement. She was a home economics teacher at Bethel College in Hopkinsville and taught at the Fort Campbell Independent Schools for 18 years.

After retirement, Mrs. Pace continued to serve her community in many ways. She was a board member of the Senior Citizens Center, president and vice president of the Christian County Retired Teachers Association, president and vice president of the Christian County Chapter of the National Association of Retired Federal Employees, president of the Christian County Homemakers Association, secretary and treasurer of the Christian County Extension Council, board member of the Kentucky Farm Bureau, and a volunteer teacher at Holiday Elementary School.

Mrs. Pace also organized and distributed food commodities for Pennyrite Allied Services. She served as president and vice president of the St. Elmo Homemakers, and she was president of the Hunting Creek Homemakers. These are only some of her many community service activities.

Mrs. Pace was a strong believer in education. She founded the Family Career and Community Leaders (FHA) Rosemary M. Pace Region II Scholarship fund. She was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma Society, International.

Mrs. Pace spent countless hours establishing and promoting the Farmers Market in Hopkinsville. She received numerous awards and honors for her outstanding volunteer work in the community and the state. She epitomized the word volunteer and her service to the community will always be held as an example to others.

Mrs. Pace was known in the community for her trademark hats. Rarely was she seen in public without a beautiful red hat. She was a truly exceptional citizen.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to call attention to the selfless acts of Rosemary M. Pace for all her efforts on behalf of so many, and I am honored to bring her accomplishments to the attention of this House.

SUPPORT THE MOSQUITO ABATEMENT FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH ACT

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 342, the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act. This is a particularly important issue in my state of Illinois and for my district, both of which have been disproportionately impacted by West Nile Virus—more so than almost any other part of the country.

The latest survey shows that Illinois is suffering the highest numbers of human cases of West Nile in the country, 877 cases and 62 deaths. Over 630 cases of these cases were in Suburban Cook County and the Greater Chicago area, leading to 37 deaths. Compared with nationwide data, these numbers reveal an uncommonly high outbreak ratio in the Chicago Metro region.

H.R. 342, the Mosquito Abatement for Safety and Health Act will help Illinois and other states across the nation prevent any more outbreaks from occurring. Among other things, the act will provide grants to states to help them coordinate mosquito control programs to prevent and control mosquito-borne diseases. The bill also directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to provide training and technical assistance to states and localities for the planning, development, and operation of assessments and plans regarding control programs. We cannot afford to lose more lives to West Nile Virus. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 342.

H.R. 5—EFFICIENT ACCESSIBLE
LOW-COST TIMELY HEALTH CARE

HON. JOHN LINDER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, the President stated that to prove our health care system we must address excessive lawsuits—a prime cause of high health care costs to improve our health care system—excessive lawsuits. In a recent survey of Georgia doctors, approximately 18 percent expect to stop providing high-risk procedures to limit their liability risk. Nearly 33 percent of obstetrician/gynecologists and 20 percent of family practitioners said they will abandon high-risk procedures, such as delivering babies. More than 11 percent will stop providing emergency room services to reduce liability risk. Rising medical malpractice insurance rates are making it difficult for doctors to continue the life-saving work they love. We all want high quality, affordable health care and we all want to maintain an American system of medicine that serves as the model of proficiency and innovation. But our doctors and hospitals are being wrongly sued, we're paying more to receive quality care, and we are losing quality doctors. I urge my colleagues to pass medical liability reform.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, February 27, 2003, my father underwent surgery and thus I was unavoidably absent for rollcall vote 39. Had I been present I would have voted 'yea' on rollcall vote 39.

AN OPEN LETTER TO FCC CHAIRMAN MICHAEL POWELL REGARDING THE CONSOLIDATION OF OWNERSHIP OF AMERICAN MEDIA

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I am enclosing a letter that I recently wrote to Michael Powell, Chairman of the FCC, regarding the growing consolidation of media ownership in America. This letter is especially relevant today as the FCC is now in the process of eliminating the few remaining regulations which would stop further consolidation of the industry.

FEBRUARY 27, 2003

DEAR CHAIRMAN POWELL, let's be clear. One of the great crises facing this country is that a handful of huge corporations control the flow of information. Whether it is television, radio, newspapers, magazines, books or the Internet, fewer and fewer giant conglomerates are determining what we see, hear and read. Unless we stop this trend and create a media with much broader ownership and diversity of opinion, it is not certain that democracy will survive in this country. This is a major, major concern that must be dealt with immediately. I fear very much that if we continue down the path we're on, we will end up like the former Soviet Union—a nation where there were many different news outlets, but all were controlled by the same entity. The difference is that in this country it will be multi-national corporations who control the media, and not the government.

Let me express my outrage that the FCC has chosen to have only one public hearing on what is one of the most important issues facing Americans today. Before any decisions are made regarding deregulation and increased corporate control over the media, the FCC must hear from the American people. In my view, the FCC should hold at least twenty meetings across the country to hear directly what ordinary the people have to say. Having held two town meetings in the state of Vermont on the issue of media consolidation, I can tell you first hand that the people of this country want to be heard on this issue. In Vermont, at the two public meetings that we held, over 600 people came out. I guarantee that you will have huge audiences all over the country and, let me take this opportunity to invite you to Vermont. Please do not make a decision without input from the people. Given what goes on in Washington it may be hard to believe, but there are opinions in this country which do not necessarily agree with Rupert Murdoch, General Electric, the Disney Corporation, and other large campaign contributors.

Why do we want more de-regulation and more concentration of ownership in the media. We should be moving in the other direction—less concentration, more diverse ownership and more points of view. Television is the means by which most Americans get their "news." Without exception, every major network is owned by a huge conglomerate that has enormous conflicts of interest. Fox News Channel is owned by Rupert Murdoch, a right-wing billionaire who already owns a significant portion of the world's media. His network has close ties to the Republican Party, and among his "fair and balanced" commentators is Newt Gingrich.

NBC is owned by General Electric, one of the largest corporations in the world and a company with enormous conflicts of interest. GE has a long history of anti-union activity. It has substantial interests in weapons manufacturing, finance, nuclear power and many other industries. It has vital concerns about our trade policy as they have been one of the leaders in shutting down American plants and moving them to low-wage countries like China and Mexico. GE is also an important contributor to the Republican Party.

ABC is owned by the Disney Corp., which produces toys and products in developing countries where they provide their workers atrocious wages and working conditions. CBS is owned by Viacom, another huge media conglomerate that owns, among other entities, MTV, Showtime, Nickelodeon, VH1, TNN, CMT, 39 broadcast television stations, 184 radio stations, Paramount Pictures and Blockbuster Inc.

The essential problem with television is not just a right-wing corporate bias in news and programming, or the transformation of politics and government into entertainment and sensationalism. Nor is it just the constant bombardment of advertising, much of it directed at children. It's that the most important issues facing the middle-class and working people of our country are rarely discussed. The average American watches dozens of hours a week of television, but to a very significant degree does not see his or her reality reflected on the screen.

In my strong opinion what the people of this country see, hear and read should not be controlled by a handful of multi-national conglomerates. More concentration of ownership in the media industry would be a disaster for this country. Stop the deregulation, and begin hearings on how we can have more diverse ownership and more divergent viewpoints on the public airwaves. Democracy is too precious to be given over to corporations interested only in growing bigger and more profitable. The airwaves and cable-ways belong to the people, and the interests of the people should be served.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

BERNARD SANDERS,
U.S. Congressman.

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT FOR
H.R. 1212 VETERANS' EDUCATION
AFFORDABILITY ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 11, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Mr. EVANS, Mr. BROWN of South Carolina, Mr.

RODRIGUEZ, and Mr. MICHAUD join me in introducing H.R. 1212, the Veterans' Education Affordability Act, to increase the Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB) monthly educational assistance allowance to \$1,200 for full-time students and repeal the \$1,200 pay reduction for MGIB eligibility.

The original World War II GI Bill exceeded all expectations and had enormous benefits beyond the immediate ones given to deserving war veterans. College enrollment grew dramatically: in 1947, GI Bill enrollees accounted for almost half of the total college population. This resulted in a need for more and larger colleges and universities. In my home state of New Jersey, Rutgers University saw its admissions grow from a pre-war high of 7,000 to almost 16,000.

In the decade following World War II, more than 2 million eligible men and women went to college using GI Bill educational benefits. The result was an American workforce enriched by 450,000 engineers, 238,000 teachers, 91,000 scientists, 67,000 doctors, 22,000 dentists and another million college-educated men and women.

Building upon the success of the original GI Bill, Congress subsequently approved a second bill following the Korean Conflict; then a third bill following the Vietnam Conflict; and a fourth bill for the post-Vietnam War era. In 1985, under the dedicated leadership of former Veterans' Committee Chairman Sonny Montgomery, Congress approved the modern version of the GI Bill which is fittingly called the Montgomery GI Bill. The MGIB was designed not only to help veterans make a transition into the workforce through additional education and training, but also to serve as a powerful recruitment tool for our all-volunteer armed forces.

With the enactment of Public Law 107-103, the Veterans Education and Benefits Expansion Act of 2001, Congress significantly increased MGIB purchasing power for veterans and servicemembers. I was privileged to author this legislation which increased the MGIB basic benefit in January 2002 from \$672 to \$800 per month. It further increased the benefit in October 2002 to \$900 and will increase the benefit in October of this year to \$985—a 46 percent increase from the \$672 per month.

But according to data furnished by the College Board, for the current academic year the MGIB benefit remains below the level needed for a veteran-student to attend a public, four-year institution as a commuter student. This increase to \$1,200 would be another significant step toward a more realistic educational benefit.

This legislation would also eliminate the \$1,200 reduction in pay required for a servicemember to gain eligibility for the MGIB. We view the \$1,200 as an unnecessary GI education tax and a hardship on the most junior servicemembers, many of whom qualify for food stamps. No other federal education program charges such a participation fee and H.R. 1212 will repeal it.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation to help both servicemembers and veterans get the most valuable benefit possible—a quality education and training for the workplace.

REGARDING TOM JARMAN

HON. J. DENNIS HASTERT

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about a very close friend of mine who is one of the unsung heroes of America. Tom Jarman is a teacher, a coach, a man of great wisdom, a noted author, and the kind of friend you would want if you ever got in a jam. He was recently inducted into the National Wrestling Coaches Association Division III Coaches Hall of Fame, but that is just one of 6 Hall of Fames that he has been inducted into. He is also a member of the Taylor University Hall of Fame, Wheaton College Hall of Fame, the Oswego High School Hall of Fame, the Indiana Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame, and the Illinois Wrestling Coaches Hall of Fame.

Tom was the co-author of *Beginning Wrestling*, one of the all-time best selling books for young wrestlers in history. Apart from teaching young kids how to wrestle, he has also coached successfully at Manchester College, Northwestern University, and Taylor University. He has coached nineteen All-Americans, along with nineteen Academic All-Americans. He has an outstanding overall record of 394-126.

Throughout his career, Tom has emphasized to his wrestlers the importance of character, the value of hard work, the best virtues of competition, and the glory of fair play. He has done so with dogged determination and with the humility and humor of a first-class teacher. I don't know what all of Tom's former students are doing now, but I guarantee you that they are better citizens because of the time they spent with him.

I first met Tom Jarman when I was in junior high, and I wrestled with him at that level, in high school and at Wheaton College. Even back then, I knew that he had the makings of a great coach and teacher. In fact, at Wheaton College, Tom was the 1963 NCAA Collegiate Division National Champion at 158 pounds, and he was twice named an NCAA All-American. While 158 pounds is a long time ago, I still remember vividly Tom's will to succeed.

All too often, in this day and age, many universities are dropping their wrestling programs for legal or financial reasons. I think that is a big mistake, because when I look at the career of someone like Tom Jarman, who has been in the trenches for so many years, molding the characters of so many young men, teaching them to succeed at wrestling and succeed at life—I think how much better off this country is because of his efforts.

So, to my good friend, Tom Jarman, I salute you on your latest honor, and I salute you for being one of America's unsung heroes. Thank you for your great contributions to American society.

**QUALITY HEALTH CARE
COALITION ACT**
HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Quality Health Care Coalition Act,

which takes a first step towards restoring a true free market in health care by restoring the rights of freedom of contract and association to health care professionals. Over the past few years, we have had much debate in Congress about the difficulties medical professionals and patients are having with Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). HMOs are devices used by insurance industries to ration health care. While it is politically popular for members of Congress to bash the HMOs and the insurance industry, the growth of the HMOs are rooted in past government interventions in the health care market through the tax code, the Employment Retirement Security Act (ERSIA), and the federal anti-trust laws. These interventions took control of the health care dollar away from individual patients and providers, thus making it inevitable that something like the HMOs would emerge as a means to control costs.

Many of my well-meaning colleagues would deal with the problems created by the HMOs by expanding the federal government's control over the health care market. These interventions will inevitably drive up the cost of health and further erode the ability of patents and providers to determine the best health treatments free of government and third-party interference. In contrast, the Quality Health Care Coalition Act addresses the problems associated with HMOs by restoring medical professionals' freedom to form voluntary organizations for the purpose of negotiating contracts with an HMO or an insurance company.

As an OB-GYN with over 30 years in practice, I am well aware of how young physicians coming out of medical school feel compelled to sign contracts with HMOs that may contain clauses that compromise their professional integrity. For example, many physicians are contractually forbidden from discussing all available treatment options with their patients because the HMO gatekeeper has deemed certain treatment options too expensive. In my own practice, I have tried hard not to sign contracts with any health insurance company that infringed on my ability to practice medicine in the best interests of my patients and I have always counseled my professional colleagues to do the same. Unfortunately, because of the dominance of the HMO in today's health care market, many health care professionals cannot sustain a medical practice unless they agree to conform their practice to the dictates of some HMO.

One way health care professionals could counter the power of the HMOs would be to form a voluntary association for the purpose of negotiating with an HMO or an insurance company. However, health care professionals who attempt to form such a group run the risk of persecution under federal anti-trust laws. This not only reduces the ability of health care professionals to negotiate with HMOs on a level playing field, but also constitutes an unconstitutional violation of medical professionals' freedom of contract and association.

Under the United States Constitution, the federal government has no authority to interfere with the private contracts of American citizens. Furthermore, the prohibitions on contracting contained in the Sherman antitrust laws are based on a flawed economic theory which holds that federal regulators can improve upon market outcomes by restricting the rights of certain market participants deemed too powerful by the government. In fact, anti-

trust laws harm consumers by preventing the operation of the free-market, causing prices to rise, quality to suffer, and, as is certainly the case with the relationship between the HMOs and medical professionals, favoring certain industries over others.

By restoring the freedom of medical professionals to voluntarily come together to negotiate as a group with HMOs and insurance companies, this bill removes a government-imposed barrier to a true free market in health care. Of course, this bill does not infringe on the rights of health care professionals by forcing them to join a bargaining organization against their will. While Congress should protect the rights of all Americans to join organizations for the purpose of bargaining collectively, Congress also has a moral responsibility to ensure that no worker is forced by law to join or financially support such an organization.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that Congress will not only remove the restraints on medical professionals' freedom of contract, but will also empower patients to control their health care by passing my Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act. The Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act puts individuals back in charge of their own health care by expanding access to Medical Savings Accounts and providing Americans with large tax credits and tax deductions for their health care expenses. Putting individuals back in charge of their own health care decisions will enable patients to work with providers to ensure they receive the best possible health care at the lowest possible price. If providers and patients have the ability to form the contractual arrangements that they find most beneficial to them, the HMO monster will wither on the vine without the imposition of new federal regulations on the insurance industry.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support the Quality Health Care Coalition Act and restore the freedom of contract and association to America's health care professionals. I also urge my colleagues to join me in working to promote a true free market in health care by putting patients back in charge of the health care dollar by supporting my Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act.

**TRIBUTE TO MR. THOMAS
SHEPARDSON**
HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Thomas Shepardson. He was a life resident of Syracuse, NY, a graduate of Simmons Institute of Funeral Service and the owner of two local funeral homes. Aside from Tom's loving family, one of his most notable accomplishments was the creation of the Disaster Mortuary Operational Rescue Team, D-MORT. Tom died of a sudden heart attack this past February 18th, he was only 59 years old.

It was Tom's ingenuity to bring together the expertise of pathologists, dentists, morticians, police and rescue workers to collect and identify bodies after incidents of mass destruction. This successful collaboration has grown from a local county response team into 10 regional D-MORT teams across the country. Under

Tom's leadership, D-MORT teams have responded to numerous disasters, including the September 11th attacks and the Oklahoma City bombings.

Mr. Speaker, directing these teams during such tragic situations is a daunting task. However Tom handled them with ease. He was always looking to help others while controlling the situation with his calm and collective demeanor. His leadership will certainly be missed.

It is truly an honor to recognize a man who's work has had such a positive and beneficial impact on so many lives. Mr. Shepardson leaves behind his wife Jacqueline, daughter Laura and two sons Peter and Christopher. Certainly they will miss Tom greatly, as will D-MORT and its members.

TRIBUTE TO MRS. HORTENSE
RIDELY TATE ON HER 104TH
BIRTHDAY

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Mrs. Hortense Ridely Tate on her 104th birthday.

Born on March 9, 1899, Mrs. Tate was aware at an early age of the importance of education in her life. Upon completing high school, Mrs. Tate enrolled in Washburn College where she began her studies to become an English teacher, inspired by her father who was an elementary school principal. After completing college in 1921, Mrs. Tate took her first job at the Montclair YWCA in Montclair, New Jersey as Director of Cultural Programs. Over the next seventy-five years, Mrs. Tate made the YWCA her home away from home, serving as a committee member, board member, and eventually its President.

In addition to her involvement at the YWCA, Mrs. Tate took a position in 1930 as a teacher at the Robert Treat Junior High School in Newark, New Jersey. While there she rose to the position of head guidance counselor and was an early mentor to me as I started my teaching career at Robert Treat Junior High School.

While being extremely involved in the education community, Mrs. Tate also has a long history of community activism. She was a founding member of the National Council for Negro Women started by Mary McCloud Bethune as well as the Montclair Public Library and Human Relations Council, the League of Women Voters, her church, and the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority.

Through her community service as well as her dedication to educating our country's children, Mrs. Tate has always been an active member in the 10th congressional district of New Jersey. It was a distinct honor and privilege to have worked with her and I wish her the very best on this momentous occasion. Mr. Speaker, I know that my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives join me today on wishing a very happy birthday to Mrs. Tate and in wishing her health and happiness in the years to come.

HONORING THE TOWN OF
HAMPDEN

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to honor the 125th birthday of Hampden, Massachusetts, March 28, 2003.

Hampden is located in the core of the 2nd district congressional district of Massachusetts. At the time of separation from Wilbraham in 1878, industries were becoming active in Hampden. There is evidence that Hampden could have well turned into one of the many New England factories or industrial towns. However, it underwent an agricultural period that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Hampden as a residential town.

Throughout the course of Hampden's history many key points have characterized the town and helped it to retain the essence of its founders. Elizabeth Sessions, a prominent founding member of Hampden, is part of a four-generation legacy. The Sessions resided in Hampden from 1790-1933, and provided the present day town hall that is utilized by the town of Hampden. Also, the parents and siblings of Foster Fiercely, the Governor of Massachusetts, resided in the town of Hampden and made it a point to invite the residents to his inauguration. Additionally, in the early industrial days of Hampden, Edwin Marcus Chaffee (1806-1872), invented the mill and calender, which are used in the processing of Rubber. Andrew Jackson Davis became a multimillionaire copper king in Montana, but was born in Hampden during its industrial era. Another famous name to come out of Hampden is Thornton W. Burgess, an author of a variety of children's books. Furthermore, his home and land became part of the Audubon Society to preserve the legacy for future generations.

In celebration of the 125th birthday of Hampden, Massachusetts, the Hampden Historical Society is hosting a dual celebration. The March 28, 2003 event is dedicated solely to the presentation of all Proclamations received and the original petitions presented from 1878. On Memorial Day, additional festivities are being held, which will consist of a parade and fan-style celebration. In closing, I would like to honor the 169 people, who in 1877 set aside differences with neighboring towns to finally petition, and ultimately create, what is now known as the town of Hampden.

HONORING BROOKLYN CHINESE-
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION 15TH
ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 15th anniversary of the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association.

The Brooklyn Chinese-American Association (BCA) has developed into the largest service and community development organization for the Asian communities of Brooklyn since its in-

ception in 1987. BCA addresses the needs and concerns of Asian Americans, which therefore enhances the strength and cohesiveness of our neighborhoods.

Since BCA's beginnings, Brooklyn's Asian-American communities have seen tremendous growth with recent estimates of more than 250,000 Asian-American residents. Sunset Park has seen such a significant increase that it is now called "Brooklyn's Chinatown." Due to this population boom BCA provides numerous services and programs to ease transition of recent immigrants.

These programs include three early childhood education centers, nine youth-oriented programs, comprehensive bilingual social services, crime prevention and victim services. BCA also organizes community events and economic development projects. One annual event BCA is proud of is the annual Chinese New Year's parade, which brings local residents together to celebrate their heritage and traditions.

In celebration of BCA's 15th anniversary, I would like to acknowledge their hard work and dedication to enhancing the lives of Asian Americans in Brooklyn. Over the years, BCA's achievements have enabled them to offer programs that bring great joy to many residents.

I hereby join the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association along with Asian-Americans throughout the city to celebrate BCA's 15th anniversary.

FREEDOM FROM UNNECESSARY
LITIGATION ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act. As its title suggests, this bill provides an effective means of ensuring that those harmed during medical treatment receive fair compensation while reducing the burden of costly malpractice litigation on the health care system. This bill achieves its goal by providing a tax credit for negative outcomes insurance purchased before medical treatment. The insurance will provide compensation for any negative outcomes of the medical treatment. Patients can receive this insurance without having to go through lengthy litigation and without having to give away a large portion of their award to a trial lawyer.

Relying on negative outcomes insurance instead of litigation will also reduce the costs imposed on physicians, other health care providers, and hospitals by malpractice litigation. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act also promotes effective solutions to the malpractice crisis by making malpractice awards obtained through binding, voluntary arbitration tax-free.

The malpractice crisis has contributed to the closing of a maternity ward in Philadelphia and a trauma center in Nevada. Meanwhile, earlier this year, surgeons in West Virginia walked off the job to protest increasing liability rates. These are a few of the examples of how access to quality health care is jeopardized by the epidemic of large (and medically questionable) malpractice awards, and the resulting increase in insurance rates.

As is typical of Washington, most of the proposed solutions to the malpractice problem involve unconstitutional usurpations of areas best left to the states. These solutions also ignore the root cause of the litigation crisis: the shift away from treating the doctor-patient relationship as a contractual one to viewing it as one governed by regulations imposed by insurance company functionaries, politicians, government bureaucrats, and trial lawyers. There is no reason why questions of the assessment of liability and compensation cannot be determined by a private contractual agreement between physicians and patients. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act is designed to take a step toward resolving these problems through private contracts.

Using insurance, private contracts, and binding arbitration to resolve medical disputes benefits patients, who receive full compensation in a timelier manner than under the current system. It also benefits physicians and hospitals, which are relieved of the costs associated with litigation. Since it will not cost as much to provide full compensation to an injured patient, these bills should result in a reduction of malpractice premiums. The Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act benefits everybody except those trial lawyers who profit from the current system. I hope all my colleagues will help end the malpractice crises while ensuring those harmed by medical injuries receive just compensation by cosponsoring my Freedom from Unnecessary Litigation Act.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICK D.
McLAUGHLIN

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, on March 21, 2003 my friend and constituent, Patrick D. McLaughlin, will retire from 36 years of service with United Parcel Service. On that day, Pat will complete a very distinguished career that he began in 1967 as an office assistant. Since then, he has enjoyed a steady rise through the UPS ranks.

During this most recent tenure as the Upstate New York Public Affairs Coordinator, Pat has been a valuable source of information, always providing a straightforward assessment on the local impact of national policy being debated in Washington. UPS provides hundreds of steady, good paying jobs in my Congressional District. Pat's capable advocacy on behalf of these employees deserves our recognition and demonstrates his unwavering commitment to the betterment of the Central New York community.

In knowing and working with Pat through the years, we have developed a lasting friendship that will continue even though his duties at UPS will soon come to an end. As a friend, I am grateful for the opportunity to formally acknowledge his meaningful contributions to our community and honor his service to UPS on the floor of the United States House of Representatives.

Good luck, Pat. Thank you for your hard work.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, on March 11, 2003, I was unable to vote on H.R. 441 (rollcall vote 50), H. Con. Res. 77 (rollcall 51), and H. Res. 19 (rollcall vote 52). Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on all three measures.

RECOGNIZING BESSIE C. ALLEN

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call the attention of my colleagues to Mrs. Bessie C. Allen. Through her work as an educator Mrs. Allen has clearly demonstrated her affection and dedication to the community and state of New Jersey. She is truly a woman of unique character, leadership and ability. Mrs. Allen is a role model to all the young people whose lives she strives to enrich.

Bessie C. Allen has exhibited an tireless commitment to education throughout her life. In 1960, Mrs. Allen graduated from Ebenezer High School in Dazell, South Carolina. She later graduated from South Carolina State College with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Home Economics Education. Mrs. Allen went on to get her Masters of Arts Degree in Urban Education from the New York State University, Buffalo, NY, and a Masters of Science Degree in Educational Administration & Supervision from Kean College in Union, New Jersey. In 2001, Mrs. Allen attended the Comer Principal's Academy and Comer training at Yale University in Stanford, Connecticut.

Bessie C. Allen served as an Extension Home Economist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture at Clemson University in Clemson, South Carolina where she diligently helped rural families and 4-H Clubs to improve life in Lee County, South Carolina. After teaching home economics at several schools, Mrs. Allen served as Head Teacher and Department Chairperson of Neptune High School, devoting her talents to the department of Home Economics, Physical Education, Health, Art, Music and Industrial Arts. Mrs. Allen also served as Vice President of Neptune High School.

Currently, Mrs. Allen is an esteemed and greatly admired Principal of the Gables Elementary School of Neptune, New Jersey and has been honored many times over for her diligent service. Bessie C. Allen was named Outstanding Young Educator in New York State, Teacher of the Year in the State of New Jersey and one of ten Teachers of the Year in the United States. In addition to these honors, Mrs. Allen has received the distinguished honors of Who's Who in American Education, the Worlds Who's Who of Women, Two Thousand Notable American Women and International Leaders in America. In 1989, Mrs. Allen received the Degree of Declaration as a Lifetime Deputy Governor of the American Biographical Institute.

Mrs. Allen is married to Frederick Allen. Together they enjoy the company of their seven

children and eight grandchildren. Mrs. Allen has spent thirty-nine years in her profession as an educator and throughout this time has continually strived to improve the lives of her students and the quality of her community. Bessie C. Allen is an exceptional woman whose strong character and talents are greatly appreciated by all who know her. On this day, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending this extraordinary individual for her dedicated service.

INTRODUCTION OF THE GIFT OF
LIFE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL
ACT OF 2003

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to reintroduce the Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act of 2003. This legislation creates a commemorative Congressional medal of honor for organ donors and their families for performing such a brave and self-less act. Recognition of these gifts of life also publicizes our critical national need to increase organ donation. I want to thank Senator FRIST a heart and lung transplant surgeon himself, for introducing companion legislation in the Senate.

There is a serious shortage of available and suitable organs for donation. Over 80,000 people are currently waiting for an organ transplant; 2,200 are children under age 18. Every 13 minutes a new name is added to the list. Because of low donor rates, in 2001 alone over 6,000 people died for lack of suitable organ. Physicians can now successfully transplant kidneys, lungs, pancreases, livers, and hearts with considerable success. But, without expanded efforts to increase organ donation, the supply of suitable organs will continue to lag behind the need. Incentive programs and public education are critical to maintaining and increasing the number of organs donated each year.

Health and Human Services' (HHS) Secretary Thompson has been a strong advocate for organ donation throughout his years in public service. Under his leadership, HHS has already implemented initiatives to raise the public awareness of this vital act of giving life. The Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act is a great opportunity for us to work with Secretary Thompson to draw attention to this life-saving issue. It sends a clear message that donating one's organs is an act that should receive the profound respect of our nation.

The Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act establishes a nonprofit fund to be used to design, produce, and distribute a Congressional medal of honor to organ donors or to a surviving family member. Enactment of this legislation would have no cost to the Federal Government. The Treasury Department would provide a small initial loan for start-up purposes, which would be fully repaid. Subsequently, the program would be self-sufficient through charitable donations.

This is non-controversial, non-partisan legislation to increase the rate of organ donation. I ask my colleagues to help bring an end to transplant waiting lists and recognize the enormous faith and courage displayed by organ donors and their families. This bill honors

these brave acts, while publicizing the critical need for increased organ donation. I urge swift passage of the Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act.

HONORING CAROL KOLBERG

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize one of Chicago's finest educators. Carol Kolberg has served the Archdiocese of Chicago for more than 32 years and has been principal of St. Bartholomew Montessori, an elementary school on the Northwest side, for the past thirteen years. Under her leadership St. Bartholomew has blossomed and today is recognized as one of the best elementary schools in the city. A lifelong educator, Ms. Kolberg was one of twelve principals in the United States selected by the National Catholic Education Association to receive the 2003 Dr. Robert J. Kealy Distinguished Principal Award. This prestigious honor is presented annually to an elementary school principal. In order to qualify an individual must first be nominated by their archdiocese. Once nominated, the Association selects the recipients based on their experience, community service, leadership, and educational philosophy. Carol Kolberg's credentials are outstanding in each of these areas and I am proud to recognize her.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take this time to thank Ms. Kolberg for her service to Chicago. Across this country educators are being held to more stringent standards for preparing students. Carol Kolberg is a shining example of an educator, among many, who has devoted her life to school children. For 32 years Ms. Kolberg has selflessly given her best so that our children can learn and advance through life. I am proud to represent Ms. Kolberg and the other educators who serve the students of the 5th Congressional District.

INTRODUCTION OF INTERNET GAMBLING LICENSING AND REGULATION COMMISSION ACT

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, you might remember a failed experiment the U.S. government tried in the 1920s called Prohibition. Back then, the government tried to prevent people from drinking alcohol by making it illegal. We know what happened—speakeasies flourished, alcohol consumption spiraled, and organized crime infiltrated and profited from the provision of alcoholic beverages.

Today, Congress is rushing to pass a similar type of ill-conceived prohibition: the prohibition of Internet gambling. Gaming prohibitionists believe they can somehow stop the millions of Americans who gamble online from visiting Internet gaming sites by passing legislation to prevent the use of credit cards and other bank instruments to gamble on the Inter-

net. Just as outlawing alcohol did not work in the 1920s, the current attempts to prohibit online gaming will not work, either.

Instead of imposing an Internet gambling prohibition that will drive gambling underground and into the hands of unscrupulous merchants, Congress should examine the feasibility of strictly licensing and regulating the online gaming industry. A regulated gambling industry will ensure that gaming companies play fair and drive out dishonest operators. It also provides a potential tax revenue source for financially-strapped States.

That is why I am introducing legislation to create a national Internet Gambling Licensing and Regulation Study Commission to evaluate how best to regulate and control online gambling in America to protect consumers, to provide badly needed tax revenue, and to prevent criminal elements from penetrating this industry. Rather than passing ineffective prohibition legislation in the vain hope that the problems related to Internet gambling will simply go away, the Commission will confront the issues head-on and formulate realistic, workable solutions.

Today in our country, gambling is a highly regulated, \$26 billion dollar industry that creates substantial tax revenue for the States and provides a safe environment for the 52 million people who gamble in U.S. facilities. The Commission will explore whether the same conditions that afford safety and fair play in land-based casinos can and should exist for Internet-based casinos. In addition, the Commission will study whether the problems identified by gambling prohibitionists—money laundering, underage gambling, and gambling addictions—are better addressed by an ineffective ban or by an online gaming industry that is tightly regulated by the States.

First, some claim that Internet gambling sites are being used to launder money for terrorists or other criminal organizations. Although there is no evidence that Internet gambling is any more susceptible to money laundering than other types of e-commerce, it is still a significant law enforcement concern. In this regard, it is useful to compare a system where Internet gambling is legal and regulated to another legislative proposal that would prohibit the use of credit cards and other financial instruments for online gambling. What that other bill essentially says to gamblers is this: use cash and offshore bank accounts if you want to bet online. This is nonsensical on its face. If you truly want to prevent money laundering, the last thing you would do is eliminate the financial controls and recordkeeping that credit cards and U.S. bank accounts provide. To the contrary, a regime where there is strict oversight by the States and transparent recordkeeping is far more likely to prevent money laundering and give law enforcement the tools it needs to effectively prosecute criminals and terrorists.

Second, the problem of underage gambling should not be discounted. Children can be kept off of gambling websites, however, by requiring the use of a credit card, PIN numbers, and other screening devices. In fact, Congress recognized the usefulness of credit cards as a tool to protect minors on the Internet when it passed the Children's Online Protection Act. Since Internet gambling prohibitions will not eliminate online gambling—just drive it underground—children will be better protected by a gaming industry that is held accountable to strict standards established by the States.

Finally, we must also consider the needs of problem gamblers and gambling addicts. Certainly, online gambling sites present difficulties for these individuals, just as land-based casinos do. Although unlicensed, unregulated gaming sites may have no incentive to prevent problem gambling, it is possible to establish a regulatory framework that can set financial limits on an individual's gambling, through the use of shared electronic recordkeeping. Technologies can even be employed to identify problem gamblers and put them in touch with organizations where they can get help. For this reason, the Internet affords the potential for greater protection for problem gamblers than land-based casinos.

Until now, Republicans and Democrats have stood together against those who wanted to cut off access to the Internet, restrict its boundaries, or use it for some special purpose. Except in the narrow areas of child pornography and other obvious criminal activities, Congress has rejected attempts to make Internet Service Providers, credit card companies, and the technology industry policemen for the Internet. We should not head down this road now. If we do, we'll be joining countries like Iraq, China, and other totalitarian regimes who limit their citizens' access to the Internet.

Attempts to prohibit Internet gambling in the name of fighting crime and protecting children and problem gamblers will have the opposite effect. Prohibition will simply drive the gaming industry underground, thereby attracting the least desirable operators who will be out of the reach of law enforcement. A far better approach is to allow the States to strictly license and regulate the Internet gambling industry, to foster honest merchants who are subject to U.S. consumer protection and criminal laws.

IN CELEBRATION OF WALTER JEFFERSON LEWIS

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, Walter Jefferson Lewis passed away on February 22, 2003. On that day, his family and friends lost a loving son, brother, and companion and the world lost a passionate lover of art, food, travel, and life itself.

Walter Lewis was born and raised in Schenectady, New York. He went on to study at Syracuse University and Schenectady County Community College, graduating with distinction in the Culinary Arts and Hotel and Business Management.

Walter served his country, spending eleven years in the United States Air Force. During that period, he was stationed in Alaska, California, New Mexico, and Germany. The time spent in those distant posts just whetted his appetite for travel; his journeys took him across much of the globe, and he made lifelong friends wherever he went.

That same passion and zest for life fueled both his occupation and avocation of baking. Walter worked for a number of years managing the bakery department of the Golub Corporation, and he shared his culinary skills with those around him: for him, food, family, and food, were all joyously intertwined.

Walter Lewis will be deeply missed by those of us who knew and loved him. He made a

special imprint through his faith, his gifts, and his joy of life. While we mourn his passing, we also celebrate his memory. May he rest in peace.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE PINK LADIES

HON. SCOTT McINNS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today in order to recognize the Pink Ladies of Delta, Colorado. This group of women has been truly dedicated to serving their community through numerous volunteer efforts with the Delta County Memorial Hospital. I would like to pay tribute to their efforts before this body of Congress and this nation today.

Over 65 strong, the "Pink Ladies" get their name from their distinctive pink jackets. Some work cleaning the whirlpool tubs used by rehabilitational patients, others greet people at the visitor's desk or in the cafeteria, and others knit baby caps for newborns. By donating more than 16,000 hours in the past year, the Pink Ladies have helped the hospital save more than \$85,000. The ladies have also raised money to fund an annual scholarship for health care students, while also donating much-needed medical equipment.

Helping those in need is truly admirable work, and these women have taken on this work with passion and fervor. It is very inspirational to see a group of people who work this much in order to help others in their community, and I feel lucky to have the ability to honor these women who have worked so selflessly for such a long time.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the Pink Ladies before this body of Congress and this nation for their dedication to their community hospital. Their volunteer efforts have truly been a wonderful benefit to not only the people of Delta County, but to the people of the State of Colorado as well.

HONORING WANDA LITTLE ON THE OCCASION OF HER RETIREMENT

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to join the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension System and the New Haven community in honoring one of our most active and distinguished community members, Wanda Lee Little, on the occasion of her retirement after thirty-two years of dedicated service.

Throughout her lifetime, Wanda has dedicated herself to enriching the lives of young people. Through her efforts to develop working social programs and her work with several service organizations, she has changed the face of our community. Wanda's endless contributions to the Greater New Haven area have made a real difference—improving the quality of life for hundreds of children and their families.

Over her thirty-two year career with the UCONN Cooperative Extension System, Wanda was responsible for the initiation of several youth development programs as well as the successful application for several grants from the United States Department of Agriculture. Her outstanding leadership and good work has provided numerous opportunities to the city of New Haven and its residents.

By adapting the USDA's SuperSnackers Program to include youth and workforce development into the program, Wanda created a youth focused model in which young people are trained in a basic nutrition curriculum and then team teach in summer camp settings throughout New Haven. Through the 4-H Summer Nutrition Education Program, Wanda served as an educator and mentor for hundreds of children—often offering these young people their first job experience. The lessons and skills these young people brought away from this program have proven to be an invaluable asset as they continue in their academic and professional careers.

Wanda's dedication to our community extends far beyond her professional career. A founding member of the City Wide Youth Coalition of New Haven, Inc., a past member of the Board of Directors for the Special Olympics Committee, and host family for Guilford, Connecticut's A Better Chance Program, her unwavering commitment to serving the community has empowered women, families, and young people to improve themselves and their lives. Her generosity and compassion is truly unmatched.

Wanda's innumerable contributions and her strong message have left an indelible mark on our community. I am pleased to rise today to join her husband, Horace, their children, grandchildren, family, friends, and colleagues in extending my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to Wanda Lee Little as she celebrates her retirement from a lifetime of good work. My sincere congratulations and very best wishes for continued health and happiness.

TRIBUTE TO BRENDAN ANTHONY ROGERS

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, a most joyous occasion has taken place for me that I want to share with you and my friends.

On December 23, 2002, my oldest son and his wife became the parents of my first grandson. Brendan Anthony Rogers became the only Rogers boy to be born in my parents' family and therefore the bearer of the name into the future. Brendan's parents, Anthony and Mindy, live in my hometown, Somerst, Kentucky.

Brendan's grandmother, my first wife, Shirley, passed away in 1995. She would be very proud, as am I, of this handsome, lively little guy.

Mr. Speaker, in the midst of the weighty issues with which we are faced in this body, my announcement of this bundle of joy is indeed a respite. However, for me, Brendan's arrival is, in itself, a weighty matter because he brings to me a sense of immortality, and I know all my colleagues can identify with that.

Mr. Speaker, I ask of you and all our colleagues, that you join me in wishing to Brendan Anthony Rogers, as he embarks on life, Godspeed!

TRIBUTE TO PAUL AND NADINE SHIRLEY

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, as Members of Congress, each of us has the privilege of representing countless numbers of constituents who work tirelessly to make their communities better. We meet these remarkable men and women every day, but often do not have the opportunity to highlight their contributions before the Nation.

Paul Shirley of Knoxville, Tennessee, is one such person, as was his late wife, Nadine. For more than 57 years of marriage this remarkable couple lived a life committed to sharing God's love with all those around them.

In November of last year, Nadine went to be with the Lord, but the example they set continues to be a standard matched by very few. Paul's dedication to changing lives around him has not slowed with Nadine's passing, and I know she is proud of his perseverance.

After graduating from the University of Tennessee in Business Administration, Paul began a career in the construction industry that continues today. From the very beginning Nadine played a key role in their business success.

Paul served as president of the Home Builder's Association of Greater Knoxville in 1962. He presently serves on the Board of Adjustments and Appeals for the City of Knoxville, a position he has held for 30 years. At each point of his professional career, Paul has always displayed the highest level of integrity and commitment to excellence.

It is, however, in the Shirleys' work together outside the business world that they found their most meaningful success. For almost 35 years, Paul and Nadine tirelessly worked to provide hundreds of children in the Knoxville area with a biblically based education surpassed academically only by the Christ-like love shown to each student.

In 1969, they, together with a dedicated group of parents, opened what was then known as West End Kindergarten. This soon expanded to become Knoxville Christian School and in 1975, the Shirleys donated 67 acres of land for what was to be the permanent campus of this growing school. Today, Knoxville Christian School provides a biblically based education to 108 students from Kindergarten through the ninth grade.

Paul served as president of the school until 1979, and both he and Nadine gave many years of service on the school's board of directors. Paul and Nadine's work, however, went far beyond what any job title implies, and their compassionate dedication to every child reached far beyond the classroom.

On February 20, 2003, those close to Knoxville Christian School came together to show their appreciation to Paul and to share in their memories of Nadine. As a small token of thanks for the impact this couple had on so many lives, Paul was presented with the

"Christian Service Award." To those of us who attended this moving event, it was obvious that every person there was richer for having known this tremendous couple.

I am proud to call Paul my friend, and I share with him in the grief he feels with the passing of Nadine. I also deeply appreciate the unwavering life of service they led together. I know that Knoxville is a better community because of the love they shared and the example they set.

As I said at the beginning of these remarks, each of us in Congress has the chance to meet and know many remarkable people. I thank you for the opportunity to introduce you to just such a couple.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO BOB
BIGELOW

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Bob Bigelow of Pagosa Springs, Colorado for his outstanding service to the education of Colorado's youth. Bob has been involved as a volunteer in Pagosa Springs schools for eight years.

Bob is a retired rancher and corporate CEO who volunteers five days a week at area schools. At the local elementary school, he offers small group attention to students who need it, and also works with sixth graders to improve math and reading skills. Outside the classroom, Bob serves as the Accountability Chair for his school district and volunteers as a "big brother" to several local youth. In honor of his service, the Pagosa Springs Area Chamber of Commerce has named Bob Citizen of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize Bob Bigelow for his dedication and commitment to the children of Pagosa Springs. His energetic service has enriched their young lives beyond measurement, and I am honored to recognize his accomplishments before this body of Congress and this nation.

HONORING BOULDER CITY HIGH
SCHOOL ATHLETES OF THE
MONTH

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sam McGrandy and Chris Stemmer, Boulder City High School's Athletes of the Month. Sam and Chris won this award based on their outstanding academic, leadership, and athletic skills.

Sam McGrandy has played every position on the girls basketball team and served as team captain last year. She has also played for the Boulder City High volleyball team, and maintains a 3.7 average in school.

Chris Stemmer has played boys basketball for Boulder City for the last three years, and

was selected to the All-Division Team last year. Chris has also competed in football and track for Boulder City High.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent each of these young athletes, and look forward to having the opportunity to honor these students on their future achievements.

FREEDOM TO READ PROTECTION
ACT

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you some remarks that I made on March 3 when I introduced the Freedom to Read Protection Act. This legislation now has 28 co-sponsors and has been endorsed by the American Library Association, the American Booksellers Association and newspapers throughout the country. Yes, we must do all that we can to U-1 protect the American people from terrorism, but we can do it in a way that protects the basic constitutional rights of our citizens.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE BERNIE SANDERS ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE FREEDOM TO READ PROTECTION ACT

Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us here today to announce the introduction of the Freedom to Read Protection Act—legislation which will protect libraries, bookstores and their patrons from unjustified government surveillance into what books Americans are reading and buying, and what websites they may be visiting when using a library computer.

Let me begin by thanking the Members of Congress who have joined me here today. I also want to thank Chris Finan of the American Booksellers Association and Emily Sheketoff—Executive Director of the American Library Association's Washington Office—for joining us. I am also delighted that Trina Magi—a librarian from the University of Vermont—and Linda Ramsdell, a bookstore owner from Hardwick, Vermont, who is the President of the New England Booksellers Association, are here with us today.

Let me also congratulate the 62 cities and towns all across this country who have passed resolutions on this issue—and that number is growing rapidly. That effort is being coordinated by the Bill of Rights Defense Committee which understands that civil liberties and constitutional rights are not only a national issue, but a local issue. I also want to thank the editorial boards of the many newspapers all over this country who have spoken out on this freedom to read issue—including the Los Angeles Times, the Detroit Free Press, the Honolulu Observer, the Providence Journal-Bulletin, the Cal-Edonia Record, and the Valley News.

The tri-partisan legislation we are introducing today—called the Freedom to Read Protection Act—would protect the privacy and First Amendment rights of American citizens against unnecessary government intrusion. Specifically, this legislation will exempt libraries and bookstores from Section 215 of the so-called "Patriot Act." The Freedom to Read Protection Act is being introduced by 24 members of Congress including Republican Ron Paul of Texas, and Congressman John Conyers, the Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee. They are

both unable to join us today but I do want to recognize their support and leadership in protecting civil liberties. I am confident that in the days and weeks to come we will add many more cosponsors.

One of the cornerstones of our democracy is our right of Americans to criticize their government, and to read printed materials without fear of government monitoring and intrusion.

Yes, all of us concerned about terrorism and all of us are determined to do all that we can to protect the American people from another terrorist attack. But, the threat of terrorism must not be used as an excuse by the government to intrude on our basic constitutional rights. We can fight terrorism, but we can do it at the same time as we protect the civil liberties that have made our country great.

Unfortunately, the Patriot Act has changed all that. Section 215 of the Patriot Act greatly expanded the FBI's ability to get records from all businesses, including libraries and booksellers, without meeting the traditional standard needed to get a search warrant in the United States.

This is a very dangerous situation. Today, all the FBI has to claim is that the information they want is somehow relevant to an investigation to protect against international terrorism. This is an extremely low threshold for government intrusion and average Americans should be extremely concerned.

The reason they should care is that Section 215 does not just apply to terrorists or even foreigners or agents of foreign powers. Under Section 215 of the Patriot Act, the person whose records are being searched by the FBI can be anyone. The FBI doesn't even have to say that it believes the person is involved in criminal activity or that the person is connected to a foreign power.

Even more frightening, the FBI can investigate American citizens based in part on an American's exercise of his or her First Amendment Rights, such as writing a letter to the editor of a newspaper or reading books the government may not approve of.

And the traditional legal protections, that have been embodied in our Constitution for hundreds of years, no longer apply. The government can gain access to our reading records through the secret FISA court which was created by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act in 1978 and which is off limits to the public. There's no way to know how many times the FBI has spied on library or bookseller records or whose records they have reviewed.

In fact, Section 215 prevents librarians and booksellers from telling their customers that their privacy has been violated. Who would have thought that in 21st Century America, the government could gain access to library circulation records and bookseller customer records with no evidence that the person whose records they are getting is involved in any wrongdoing, that all of this would be handled through a secret government court, and that the librarians and booksellers would be compelled by the law not to let anyone know that the government had swooped in to get their records?

Now some may ask how the federal government is using this new power. Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are also interested in that question and have pressured the Justice Department to show how

they are using these new powers. The information they have received after months of badgering the Department is inadequate. The Justice Department claimed most of the information regarding libraries and bookstores was "confidential," and could not be provided. This past October, several national organizations, including the American Booksellers Association, filed a Freedom of Information Act request to get statistical information, such as how many times the government has used its expanded surveillance authority under the Patriot Act. In January, a very limited amount of information was released to these groups and they are continuing to push for a more complete disclosure.

Importantly, an anonymous survey done by the University of Illinois found that over 175 libraries across the country have been visited by federal authorities since the September 11th attacks. How is the Congress and the public supposed to make sure that these new powers are not being abused when we do not even know how often they are being invoked and the types of institutions that are being investigated?

For many people who can not afford to buy books or have the Internet at home the library is critical to their ability to access to information. Many librarians and booksellers now fear that patrons have begun to self-censor their library use and book purchases due to fears of government surveillance. We need to remove libraries and booksellers from Section 215 so that Americans know their freedom to access information won't be improperly scrutinized by federal agents.

Let us be clear. The FBI would still be able to gain access to library or bookseller records as part of an investigation into illegal activity. All our bill does is restore the traditional protections that Americans expect and deserve. If the FBI has probable cause to believe that information in a library or bookseller's records or computers is connected to an ongoing criminal investigation or terrorism investigation, they can go to court and get a search warrant.

In addition, the bill requires that the Justice Department provide more detailed information about its activities under Section 215 so we can determine how the FBI is using its new powers under Section 215.

Let me conclude by saying that all of us support protecting Americans from terrorism. But we do not win against terrorists by abandoning our most basic civil liberties. We cannot be an example of freedom for the world when our own government is spying on what Americans are reading.

HONORING THE UNITED COMMUNITY NURSERY SCHOOL AS THEY CELEBRATE THEIR 40th ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, for the last four decades, the United Community Nursery School has been an invaluable resource to many children and families of New Haven. I am pleased to rise today to join with friends, families, and community leaders in paying tribute to their outstanding contributions as they celebrate their 40th Anniversary.

I have long held a firm belief in the importance of education and have often spoke of our nation's need to ensure that, even at the

earliest stages, our children have access to programs and services that will enrich their education. The United Community Nursery School has been doing just this for the last forty years. Before initiatives like Headstart and before educational programming like Sesame Street and Mr. Rogers, the founders of the United Community Nursery School recognized this need and worked hard to find a solution.

At the time of its inception, quality nursery school programs were not available to every family. Members of the United Church on the Green, realizing this gap in the community, began to look for a way to offer these programs to all of New Haven's children. They envisioned a setting where small children, regardless of background, culture, or religion, would be able to play and learn together. They envisioned a preschool where talented and caring teachers could work with families to ensure that their young children were developing the skills and tools they need for a strong educational foundation. What began as a single classroom with a part-time staff grew quickly to become a remarkable education program for toddlers throughout New Haven.

The United Community Nursery School became one of the first in Connecticut to be accredited by the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. A respected community resource, they were also one of the first to be designated as a New Haven School Readiness site. For four decades, the dedication and commitment of the staff and the members of the United Church have ensured that this treasure continues to provide much-needed early learning programs. Over the last several years, research has shown and experts have said that early learning is a fundamental piece of a child's education. The New Haven community—and more importantly our young children—have indeed been fortunate to have benefitted from the many contributions of the United Community Nursery School.

It is with great pleasure that I rise today to join all of those gathered in extending my sincere thanks and appreciation to the United Community Nursery School for all of their good work as well as my sincere congratulations on their 40th Anniversary. The legacy they have built will continue to educate and inspire generations to come.

IN MEMORY OF ZORAN DJINDJIC

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we learned today of the assassination in Belgrade of the Prime Minister of Serbia, Zoran Djindjic.

This is a true tragedy, not only for family and friends of Mr. Djindjic but for all the people of Serbia and, indeed, for all who struggle for human rights and democratic development.

Zoran Djindjic became a leader during difficult times in his country. He chose to stand in opposition to Slobodan Milosevic and his regime. That certainly was not the easiest course, and it took courage. Zoran Djindjic also had determination and, after repeated setbacks and obstacles, he played a key role in ousting Milosevic from power in 2000. He subsequently became, as Prime Minister of

Serbia, a force for reform, recognizing that Serbia needed to cast off not only the yoke of Milosevic's rule but also Milosevic's legacy of nationalist hatred, organized crime, corruption and greed. Transferring Milosevic to The Hague in 2001 to face charges for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide perhaps best symbolized Djindjic's continued courage and determination to conquer the sinister forces which seized his country.

Zoran Djindjic was still battling resistance to reform in Serbia when his life was taken by the vicious act of cold-blooded assassins.

These will undoubtedly be turbulent times for Belgrade, for Serbia, and for Montenegro which is just embarking on a new relationship with Serbia. This tragedy may have reverberations throughout the region, particularly in Bosnia and in Kosovo.

It is my hope and prayer, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Serbia will respond to this crime with a loud and united cry: "Enough is enough." In the past, they have seen the lives of journalist Slavko Curuvija and politician Ivan Stambolic snuffed out for their advocacy of a civilized Serbia, in which human rights and the rule of law are respected.

Similarly Djindjic, too, was advocating such noble objectives. The very decent people of Serbia deserve a society which respects human rights and upholds the rule of law. That is what the leaders of Serbia must now provide without further hesitation or delay. I take heart in knowing that Djindjic had many colleagues who shared his vision of a reformed Serbia.

My deepest condolences go to the family of Zoran Djindjic. I hope that the incredible grief they must now feel will be tempered by the pride they should feel in his accomplishments and service to his country.

COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE
DEVOLUTION ACT OF 2003

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I introduced the "Commercial Driver's License Devolution Act of 2003." This legislation will give states the option to establish their own commercial driver's license (CDL) requirements for intrastate drivers.

As many in this House already know, I have always been a strong advocate for taking power out of Washington and returning it to the states. I do not believe that our traditional, one-size-fits-all approach to governing is effective, efficient or economical for the American taxpayer.

The legislation which I propose today would return power to the states by giving states the option, and I emphasize option, to license intrastate drivers of commercial motor vehicles based upon testing standards determined by the individual states. As you know, the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 (CMVSA) required states to establish a new and uniform program of testing and licensure for all operators of commercial vehicles both intra- and interstate. The principal objectives of this Act have been met and would not be harmed by this legislation.

The CMVSA is good law, and its provisions were necessary and timely for improving

standards of performance for long-haul truck drivers. The CMVSA, however, was also imposed upon intrastate commerce where the operation of trucks may be a small but necessary part of an individual's job. We imposed our will on thousands of small businesses not involved in long-haul trucking and somehow expected them to adjust to any circumstance that might arise. Under these conditions, I believe it should be within a state's discretion to determine what kind of commercial vehicle licensure and testing is required for commerce solely within its borders.

I again want to emphasize that it would be entirely up to each state whether it chooses to reassume authority over licensing and testing of intrastate drivers. A state that chooses to exercise this option would in no way diminish the role of the CDL in the long-haul trucking industry. Additionally, this legislation effectively precludes two or more states from using this option as the basis for an interstate compact. I am confident that those states taking advantage of this option will develop testing standards that maintain the same level of safety offered by the federal program. After all, the primary mission of all state DOTs is to ensure the safety of those travelling on its roads.

This legislation is extremely important to our nation's small businesses, and I urge the House to adopt this measure.

THE REINTRODUCTION OF THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this is a difficult time. We're worried about the possibility of war and concerned about the men and women in our armed forces, but the best way to honor democracy is to ensure equality and justice for all. That's why we're leading this bipartisan movement for the Equality Amendment for women and men. We intend to do all we can to see that it becomes part of the Constitution, which is where it belongs.

I am proud to be joined by my Republican colleagues, JIM LEACH and JUDY BIGGERT. I am also grateful to the dean of the House, JOHN DINGELL, for his leadership on so many issues important to women; to leading pollster Mark Penn of the firm Penn, Schoen, and Berland; and to the noted economist, Dr. Heidi Hartman. I'd also like to acknowledge the representatives of so many organizations dedicated to improving the lives of women and families.

Women have achieved a great deal, but the statutory route has not been as successful as we hoped. The Glass Ceiling, the Pink Ghetto, the wage gap, the occupation gap, and sexual harassment are real problems. We're reintroducing the Equality Amendment because the only guarantee that American women will never again be subject to inferior treatment is to engrave the principle of women's equality into the Constitution.

We've seen over the years that laws can change, judicial attitudes can shift, and the gains we've won can slip from our grasp. The need for a constitutional guarantee of equal rights for women is compelling. We must do more, much more, to guarantee fair treatment

in the work place. Existing laws can't get the job done, and could be rolled back.

Title IX, which for three decades guaranteed equality in education and in academic sports programs, is being eroded.

Enforcement measures on discrimination laws are backlogged and badly underfunded.

Women continue to be treated differently than men in pensions, insurance, and judicial awards.

Women still have trouble gaining access to housing and to equal pay for equal work. The wage gap persists. In fact, the Dingell-Maloney study that we released last year showed the gap in managerial salaries is actually widening.

Women still earn 76 cents for each dollar earned by a man. After a full day's work, no woman should be forced to take home only three quarters of a paycheck.

Too many women continue to be victims of sexual harassment.

Over nine out of ten Americans support equal rights for men and women, as Mark Penn can discuss. In fact, polling data shows that most Americans think the Constitution already guarantees gender equality—and they don't want it repealed. The ERA would establish that as a reality once and for all. It is time to ensure that the legal right to equality regardless of sex is subject to the same level of judicial review as race or other classes.

With 187 co-sponsors so far, the Equality Amendment has strong support in the House. And it enjoys strong backing in the Senate. Ours is a bipartisan, grass roots effort. With the help of organizations represented here and the over 140 groups that have already endorsed it, I hope we'll be able to move the ERA to a vote.

It is time for women to have an equal place in the Constitution. It is time for the Equal Rights Amendment to become law. Inscribed over the Supreme Court is the statement "Equal Justice Under the Law" and it means ALL people. And in 2003, we intend to SEE that equal justice under the law happens . . . and making the ERA part of the Constitution is the right way to do it.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO: DR. M. EDMUND VALLEJO

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Dr. Edmund Vallejo of Pueblo, Colorado. Dr. Vallejo has been a dedicated teacher and mentor in the Pueblo community for nearly fifty years. He has made significant contributions as an author and citizen, and it is my honor to pay tribute to his accomplishments before this body of Congress and this nation.

Edmund grew up in an orphanage for boys in Denver and graduated from St. Mary's High School in Walsenburg, Colorado. After a year at Regis University, he joined the U.S. Navy and trained to be an aerial photographer. Edmund served the United States during the Korean War, and received a battle star for taking video footage of the fighting on Bunker Hill and Siberia Hill.

After being discharged, Edmund went back to school, first at Adams State College, then at

the University of Northern Colorado, ultimately receiving a Ph.D. in education from Kansas University in 1975. Edmund spent over thirty-six years in Pueblo School District No. 60 as a teacher, guidance counselor, principal and superintendent. After retiring in 1991, he has furthered his dedication to education by serving as a mentor and tutor to at-risk children in the district, and Edmund now serves as the volunteer coordinator for Communities In Schools of Pueblo, a volunteer mentoring and tutoring program.

Edmund's other interests include both civic service and writing. He is a member of the Kiwanis Club of Pueblo, the Colorado Historical Society Board of Directors, the Rocky Mountain Council Boy Scouts of America Executive Board, the Pueblo School District No. 60 Educational Foundation, the Pueblo Chamber of Commerce, and VFW Post 5812. He is a contributing author to educational and historical journals and has already published a compilation of Colorado photography. He is working on a photo book about his Korean War experiences.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that Edmund Vallejo is a remarkable man with an extraordinary lifetime of achievements. He has served his nation, his community, and his students well, and I would like to extend to him my congratulations on a life lived with a passion and dedication to serving others. I wish him the best in his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with Representatives ANNA ESHOO, J.D. HAYWORTH, and XAVIER BECERRA in introducing the bipartisan Medicare Medical Nutrition Therapy Amendment Act of 2003. Several years ago, we amended the Medicare program to provide coverage for medical nutrition therapy services provided by registered dietitians and nutrition professionals for persons with diabetes or renal disease. The legislation we are introducing today will add Medicare coverage for services for beneficiaries with cardiovascular disease.

Medical nutrition therapy provided by registered dietitians and nutrition professionals is sound health care policy. It can save millions of dollars for a health care system beleaguered by escalating costs, and it can prevent unnecessary pain and suffering for millions of people and their families. In response to a request in the 1997 Balanced Budget Act, the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences studied the value of adding medical nutrition therapy services for Medicare beneficiaries and the Medicare program and issued a report recommending that this benefit be added to the program. The report stated that coverage for medical nutrition therapy will "improve the quality of care and is likely to be a valuable and efficient use of Medicare resources, because of the comparatively low treatment costs and ancillary benefits associated with nutrition therapy." The report concluded that nutrition therapy has proven effective in the "management and treatment of

many chronic diseases that affect Medicare beneficiaries, including . . . hypertension, heart failure, diabetes, and chronic renal insufficiency.”

I urge my colleagues who have not yet cosponsored this bipartisan, sound health policy proposal to join us in this effort.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives considered several bills under suspension of the rules yesterday and my vote was not recorded on those measures.

Had I been present, I would have voted “aye” on rollcall vote 50, rollcall vote 51, and rollcall Vote 52.

JAMES FRANCIS HOMAN

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize James Francis Homan, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 312, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

James has been very active with his troop, participating in such Scout activities as the Roe Bartle Scout Reservation. Over the 11 years he has been involved in Scouting, he has held numerous leadership positions, serving as Camp Senior Patrol Leader, Patrol Leader, Assistant Patrol Leader, Quartermaster, and Instructor. James also has been honored for his numerous Scouting achievements with the award of the Firebuilder in the tribe of Mic-O-Say award. Additionally, he has earned 34 merit badges during his years in Scouting.

For his Eagle Scout project, James converted and old pastor's study/storage room into a prayer chapel at Ascension Lutheran Church. He enlisted the services of families, fellow Scouts and members of his congregation to clean the windows, paint and refurbish the room.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending James Francis Homan for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO: UNITED WAY OF PUEBLO COUNTY

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize the United Way of Pueblo County, Colorado. The United Way has been serving Pueblo County for

eighty years, providing a central resource for donations to support an array of critical community services. It is my honor to commend the Pueblo United Way's long record of success before this body of Congress and this nation.

The United Way organization came to Pueblo in 1923 when community leaders raised \$105,000 by knocking on neighbors' doors. Though this effort went through many name changes, it always pursued the same mission: creating a central community fund to support community services. Today, the Pueblo County United Way is an autonomous organization that can focus its resources on the specialized needs of Pueblo County. It relies on hundreds of dedicated volunteers to raise money and keep administration costs low.

Over the years, the UWPC has raised over \$31 million with its fundraising campaigns for its nineteen partner agencies including the American Red Cross, Pueblo Community Health Center, Salvation Army, and the YWCA. Other United Way partner agencies focus on youth development, providing basic food and shelter, and addressing the problems of domestic abuse. In addition, Pueblo United Way administers an endowment gift from the El Pomar Foundation and FEMA funds from the federal government to assist in emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, the United Way makes every dollar count for the citizens of Pueblo County. Thanks to the United Way, thousands of Coloradans have benefited from the generosity of their neighbors, and thousands more have known the joy of giving. It is my great pleasure to honor their eighty years of success here today. Congratulations, and may the United Way continue to serve Pueblo County long into the future!

HONORING A DEDICATED PUBLIC SERVANT, MS. DIANN CONDREY

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, there are many unsung heroes who work day and night, week after week, month after month, to support the operation of the United States Congress. Most of these dedicated people labor outside of the spotlight—away from the glamour that is often associated with public service—but their work insures that our work can be done. One such dedicated public servant, Ms. Diann Condrey, will conclude her distinguished tenure on Capitol Hill this month and I rise tonight to salute Diann for her untiring loyalty and service.

Diann began her government career as a high school student in 1968 when she began working with the Department of Defense during the Vietnam war. At that time Diann's salary was a meager \$3,776 a year.

Diann spent the next 16 years working for the Army and Navy originally as a Management assistant and later as a computer specialist and project manager. In 1992, she took a position with the United States House of Representatives as a committee consultant providing computer support services to committees and to leadership offices. In 2000, she became the team leader responsible for training newly hired TSRs.

During my staff days on the Hill, I worked with Diann on a regular basis and got to know her very well. She has been a great asset to our Hill community. Her understanding of often complicated programs was always met with passion for helping her clients understand how to best implement the rapidly changing advances made in computers and technology.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Diann Condrey for her many years of commitment to her Nation through her continued service and employment with the United States. I wish Diann the best of luck in her retirement and always.

THE MEDICARE R_x DRUG BENEFIT AND DISCOUNT ACT OF 2003

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, last week, President Bush announced his prescription drug proposal for Medicare beneficiaries. Rather than using this opportunity to promote a quality drug benefit that would be dependable and guaranteed for seniors and persons with disabilities on Medicare, the President instead announced his intention to provide a financial benefit to pharmaceutical and insurance companies. By pushing seniors into HMOs—the path to Medicare privatization—and doing nothing to lower drug prices, the Bush policy would enrich industry instead of reducing the financial burden on beneficiaries.

Fortunately, an alternative plan, tailored to meet the needs of Medicare beneficiaries, would provide a comprehensive benefit that is both affordable and guaranteed. I support that plan, outlined by Leader NANCY PELOSI, Whip STENY HOYER, and Representatives DINGELL, RANGEL and others, because it puts the needs of Medicare beneficiaries first.

There is no benefit specified in the President's proposal. President Bush proposes that seniors enrolled in the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program would be eligible for catastrophic loss coverage, a discount drug card, and a \$600 subsidy for those in the lowest income bracket. We don't know how much the catastrophic limit would be—\$5,000, \$7,000, or more. A drug card and a requirement that you spend thousands and thousands of dollars out-of-pocket is not a benefit.

There are several major problems with the President's proposal.

First, a catastrophic-only benefit will help very few beneficiaries. The average Medicare beneficiary spends \$2,500 a year for prescription drugs, meaning that they would get no benefit. For example, if the cap for catastrophic coverage is set at \$6,000, it would only cover 8 percent of Medicare beneficiaries. This enormous out-of-pocket expense is on top of existing Medicare cost-sharing requirements, which are already high.

Second, the Bush administration continues to promote drug cards, even when evidence shows the cards provide little assistance. Seniors would purchase the card for approximately \$25 and then receive only 10 percent to 15 percent off their prescription drugs. In other words, an average beneficiary with \$2,500 in drug bills would pay \$2,125 to

\$2,250 under the Bush plan. In contrast, drug companies receive about \$25 per person, per year from any number of the over 40 million current Medicare beneficiaries. Drug cards are marketed by private companies, and herein lies the true motivation to promote them.

Not only do the cards provide a financial windfall for private companies, but they fail to offer meaningful assistance to Medicare beneficiaries. Even with the card, there is no guarantee that needed prescription drugs would be covered. Likely, drugs would have to be on a pre-approved list to be covered.

Third, a \$600 subsidy for Medicare recipients who are living at the poverty level is simply inadequate. Low-income elderly and disabled persons do not have the resources to purchase their medicine. Too often, they are forced to skip taking their necessary prescription because they can't afford it. President Bush's plan would offer the poorest Medicare beneficiaries a way to get \$600 more worth of medicine, but unless they are eligible for Medicaid, they are still left to pay the rest of their costs on their own.

Catastrophic coverage, discount cards, and a possible subsidy constitute the extent of the President's plan unless beneficiaries move out of the traditional Medicare program and into a private plan, such as a PPO or HMO. Currently 89 percent of Medicare's beneficiaries are enrolled in the traditional fee-for-service program where they can choose their physician. President Bush is effectively pushing them out of that program and into a private plan, where they would supposedly receive an actual drug benefit. However, the details of the actual drug benefit—the premium level, cost-sharing requirements, and value of the benefit itself—are not delineated in the President's proposal. The lack of detail present throughout the proposal is extremely disconcerting.

Medicare+Choice is a haunting reminder of how private plans under Medicare can leave beneficiaries without choice, benefits, and providers. The plans not only lowered benefits and raised cost-sharing, but in many places pulled out of the market altogether. The drug benefit that Medicare+Choice initially offered has since largely dissipated. In 1999, only 11 percent of Medicare+Choice enrollees had a drug cap of \$500 or less, meaning that plan would only cover up to \$500 of drug costs. By 2002, that percentage exploded, leaving 50 percent of enrollees with a drug cap of less than \$500. Since 1999, 2.4 million beneficiaries have been dropped from the Medicare+Choice program completely. In over 30 years, the Medicare program has never dropped a beneficiary from coverage.

The Administration wants to use the drug benefit as a carrot to lure beneficiaries into private plans. This forces elderly and disabled populations to choose between doctors they know and trust and the medications they know they need. We are not fooled by what the administration is doing. They have no intention of offering a drug benefit to Medicare recipients. The reason why President Bush is pushing this approach is because he is attempting to privatize the entire Medicare program.

It is imperative that we critically examine the risks involved in pushing beneficiaries into private plans, even though the list of concerns is long and daunting. Private insurance plans are inherently risky and unstable. Covered benefits would vary from plan to plan, from state to state, from one year to the next—leaving mil-

lions of beneficiaries with unstable coverage, if any at all. Private insurance plans are not available in every city or state, can drop coverage at any time, occasionally go bankrupt, and can be taken over by other HMOs that later change the rules. Under Medicare, the same basic package is available everywhere.

In addition to reducing benefits, private plans could raise premiums, increase copayments, restrict formularies, and limit choice of doctors or pharmacies in order to offset costs. Between 2001 and 2002, average monthly premiums increased 40 percent for Medicare+Choice enrollees. Enrollees in these plans have also been subjected to rising copayments for both generic and prescription drugs. Private plans can restrict formularies thereby dictating and restricting covered drugs. In fact, some private plans have completely eliminated coverage of brand-name prescription drugs. This is especially troubling, considering that of the 50 drugs the elderly most commonly use, 40 are brandname drugs, and only eight of these are available in a generic version. Private plans restrict beneficiaries to those doctors or pharmacies included in a particular plan. Even though the elderly and persons with disabilities often choose their physicians or their pharmacies based on nearness and accessibility, private plans would not take this into account.

I am not willing to compromise the health and well-being of senior citizens and people with disabilities so that private companies can get rich. Medicare beneficiaries deserve a real and substantive drug benefit regardless of the Medicare plan they are enrolled in. For those reasons, I support the House Democratic prescription drug proposal, the Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act of 2003.

The House Democratic proposal adds a new Part D in Medicare that provides voluntary prescription drug coverage for all Medicare beneficiaries beginning in 2006. Those wanting the benefit would pay a \$25 monthly premium and a \$100 deductible for drug coverage. Medicare would pay 80 percent of drug costs, 100 percent after beneficiaries spent \$2000 out of their own pockets on prescriptions. Full coverage of premiums and assistance would be provided for persons with incomes below 150 percent of poverty and sliding scale premiums would be in effect for those persons between 150 percent and 175 percent of the poverty level.

Under the Democratic proposal, strong measures will be implemented to keep drug prices down. First, the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) would use the collective bargaining clout of more than 40 million Medicare beneficiaries to negotiate fair drug prices. Second, drug companies will be prevented from extending patents that allow them to use their monopoly power to block competition and keep prices artificially high.

The Medicare Rx Drug Benefit and Discount Act of 2003 offers a real benefit to Medicare beneficiaries as opposed to drug companies. Bush's proposal is served up as a gift to drug and insurance companies that have financed Republican elections and agendas. If the President has his way, insurance and drug companies will profit, but millions of Medicare beneficiaries will still lack affordable, comprehensive coverage.

FORMER INSURANCE AGENTS TAX EQUITY ACT OF 2003

HON. PAUL RYAN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today with my colleagues Congressman JERRY WELLER, Congressman JERRY KLECZKA, Congressman TOM PETRI, Congressman MARK GREEN, and Congresswoman TAMMY BALDWIN, to introduce the Former Insurance Agents Tax Equity Act of 2003, a bill designed to correct a minor oversight in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. This legislation will help ensure that certain retired insurance agents are not unfairly subjected to self-employment tax. It will bring consistency and fairness to the tax treatment of similarly situated former insurance agents.

Under current law, a small number of agents are forced to pay self-employment taxes on their retirement payments, while their peers at other insurance companies do not. This is because a change in the Taxpayers Relief Act of 1997 (TRA) was drafted in a way that unintentionally excluded a small group of agents.

In the TRA, Congress enacted a provision designed to clarify that certain termination payments received by valued, long-term former insurance agents should be exempt from self-employment tax. Unfortunately, the changes in 1997 provided clarification for most agents, but not others, as a result of how certain insurance companies structure their agent agreements.

As enacted, the 1997 provision provides that payments to a retired agent are exempt from self-employment tax when the agent's eligibility is tied to length of service, but not when the actual amounts of the payments are tied to the agent's length of service. Simply put, this is a distinction without a difference. There is no reason to provide different tax treatment for arrangements that are so similar just because the sum of an agent's termination payment is determined by varying the amount of compensation rather than the term of compensation.

Hard-working agents whose payments are tied to their length of service deserve the same fair treatment accorded to their counterparts at other insurance companies. Both types of contract seek to satisfy the same goal of rewarding loyal, long-time agents with more generous retirement payments. All of these payments, of course, continue to be subjected to income taxes.

The Former Insurance Agents Tax Equity Act of 2003 would simply strike language in the Internal Revenue Code that prevents companies from using a former agent's length of service in determining the amount of termination payment the agent will receive. In doing so, this bill fulfills Congress' intentions with the TRA and provides equitable tax treatment for all former agents. In addition, the budget implications are minor since only a very small number of agents are affected. This provision enjoys the support of thousands of insurance agents around the country, as well as the National Association of Life Underwriters, the Coalition of Exclusive Agents, and the National Association of Independent Insurers.

In the interest of ensuring that termination payments to former insurance agents are

treated fairly and consistently under our tax laws, I hope that you will join me in supporting the Former Insurance Agents Tax Equity Act of 2003.

HONORING GLENN RANDALL

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to rise today and recognize Glenn Randall, an outstanding young cross-country skier from Collbran, Colorado. Despite unlikely odds, Glenn won the right to compete in the Junior World Championships in February. His dedication to the sport, and his determination, is truly a credit to this young athlete.

Glenn developed asthma at the age of three, but set his mind on racing with an inhaler. After competing in five- and ten-kilometer races, Glenn decided to enter the 30K United States Cross Country Championships. His parents, both avid cross-country skiers themselves, wondered whether their son could handle the exertion.

Glenn, who is sixteen and a high school sophomore, placed twenty-first overall and second among juniors, earning him a place on the American team for the World Championships and making him the youngest member of the U.S. team. Unlike many elite skiers, Glenn still attends a public school, squeezing in training around school hours, while also participating in high school cross-country and track.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great privilege to recognize Glenn Randall for his dedication and hard work before this body of Congress and this nation. The determination of this young man to exceed all expectations and overcome all obstacles is an inspiration to his peers as well as his elders. Glenn, who has achieved so much at a young age, has great things ahead of him, and it is my distinct pleasure to wish him the best of luck.

PNTR TO RUSSIA

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today Mr. RANGEL, Mr. PITTS, Mr. CARDIN and myself introduced a bill that would grant permanent normal trade relations (PNTR) to Russia and "graduate" Russia from the application of the so-called Jackson-Vanik amendment. The legislation would provide a historic update in U.S.-Russia trade relations. It would strengthen U.S.-Russian relations and reinforce progress Russia has made in many areas. Additionally, the legislation would ensure that Congress continues to play an active role—with the Administration and with Russia—in confronting trade disputes and negotiating the terms of Russia's WTO accession.

It is useful to recall at the outset that the Jackson-Vanik amendment was itself an amendment to Title IV of the Trade Act of 1974, a trade statute. In particular, Title IV

created a framework for conducting trade relations with non-market economies. The Jackson-Vanik amendment, which has been an effective tool for raising freedom of emigration and human rights concerns, is a key element of Title IV; however, the underlying purpose and function of the statute were and remain the conduct of trade relations.

Accordingly, PNTR legislation must address fundamental trade issues. Consistent congressional practice is to grant PNTR to a country that is subject to Jackson-Vanik only at the time of the country's WTO accession, or when negotiations on accession were effectively completed. In this way, Congress' vote on PNTR has served as a way to signal approval for the country's WTO accession agreement. Under this approach, Congress was able to exercise its constitutional prerogative to regulate commerce with foreign nations, and the American people benefitted from the Administration negotiating the strongest possible agreement.

This precedent has led to an important series of successful accessions to the WTO, including most notably for China, on terms that reinforced the WTO rules-based system, and brought great benefits to the people of the United States as well as other WTO countries.

In the case of Russia, WTO accession terms are still being negotiated. I believe it is appropriate to depart from that precedent and grant Russia PNTR now, so long as Congress retains a strong and effective tool to ensure that U.S. interests are fully addressed in those negotiations. And, there are many critical issues that still need to be addressed—Russian commitments to open its auto market, commitments in the services and other sectors, ongoing problems with pricing in the industrial energy sector, intellectual property protection, to name just a few. Moreover, several recent actions by Russia—including last year's poultry ban and potential new restrictions on beef and pork—have renewed concerns in Congress about Russia's commitment to opening its market to U.S. exports and service providers and to adopting market-oriented reforms.

This legislation ensures that Congress will continue to play an active role in addressing trade problems as they emerge and in obtaining a strong WTO accession agreement from Russia. While giving up the precedent of using the PNTR vote as a proxy for approval of WTO accession, the legislation allows Congress to consider a resolution directly addressing the terms of agreement between the U.S. and Russia on Russia's WTO accession. While in its form, this resolution would be non-binding on the Executive, it would provide Congress with an important tool to assure itself of a continuing role in the formation of the terms of Russia's WTO accession and thereby implement Congress' constitutional responsibility of oversight over trade matters.

There are two sides to the PNTR coin—the trade issues and the "Jackson-Vanik" issues. The Jackson-Vanik amendment was an historic piece of legislation, aimed at addressing a serious problem in the former Soviet Union. It set forth important criteria related to freedom of emigration necessary for certain countries to obtain normal trade relations with the United States. Even from its inception, however, the Jackson-Vanik amendment was not only concerned with freedom of emigration, but also reflected the American commitment to

human rights and freedom of religion. This fact is evident not only in the preamble of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, but also in the operation of U.S. relations with the former Soviet countries for nearly thirty years.

I think it is appropriate, then, that as we consider graduating Russia from the Jackson-Vanik amendment, that we place a strong emphasis on freedom of emigration, religious freedom, and human rights issues. These were the issues at the core of the Jackson-Vanik amendment, and continue to be relevant when considering "graduation," particularly for Russia, which was and is in many ways the primary focus of the Jackson-Vanik amendment.

I am glad that we were able to craft a bill that addresses these vital issues in a responsible way, rather than giving them "check-the-box" cursory treatment. The presence of Members of the Helsinki Commission on the bill, who have a long history of dealing with human rights and religious freedoms, demonstrates that we have given these issues the careful treatment they deserve.

Earlier this week, Senator LUGAR, the distinguished Senator from Indiana and a key participant in consideration of our relations with other nations, introduced a Russia PNTR bill. This bill did not address the issue of assuring a continuing congressional role in the resolution of vital elements of an agreement on Russia's WTO accession. I believe that Congress has a substantial role to play in overseeing negotiations of Russia WTO accession agreement to ensure that it provides the strongest benefits for U.S. workers, farmers and businesses, and therefore we are introducing this legislation today.

WHAT IF A PENSION SHIFT HIT
LAWMAKERS, TOO?

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to share with you an article which appeared in the March 9th New York Times. It is not acceptable to me that millions of older American workers could lose the pensions they were promised by their companies because of a conversion to a cash balance pension. My experience in working with IBM employees in Vermont has shown me that these cash balance schemes are extremely unfair and could cut the expected retirement benefits of older workers by up to 50 percent.

Every member of Congress enjoys a defined benefit pension plan. We can figure out exactly how much we will receive when we retire by computing the years we have served, our salaries and the age at which we retire. A study I recently requested from the Congressional Research Service, CRS, shows very clearly that if members in Congress were in cash balance plan they would receive substantially less in pensions than in the defined benefit plan we currently enjoy.

President Bush has proposed regulations that would legalize age discrimination in cash balance pension conversion. These proposed regulations would give the green light to Fortune 500 companies to raid the pension benefits of millions of older workers. It seems to me

that if Congress allows this extremely unfair proposal to go into effect, and jeopardizes the pensions of American workers, it should be prepared to do the same thing for itself.

Mr. Speaker, if cash balance plans are good enough for American workers, they should be good enough for members of the U.S. Congress. My understanding is that the Pension Security Act is supposed to go on the floor for debate sometime this month. During that time it is my intention to offer an amendment which would give all vested employees the right to choose which pension plan works best for them under a cash balance conversion. If that amendment does not succeed, I intend to offer another amendment that would convert the traditional pensions of members of Congress into cash balance plans if the President's proposal goes into effect. What's good for the American worker should be good for members of Congress.

[From the New York Times, March 9, 2003]
WHAT IF A PENSION SHIFT HIT LAWMAKERS,
TOO?

(By Mary Williams Walsh)

As members of Congress prepare to reform the pension system, they might want to think hard about the proposals on the table. A new study has examined what would happen to their own retirement benefits if the changes that some favor for other workers were applied to them. The answer might give them pause.

Virtually every senator and representative would lose out, the study found—in some cases by hundreds of thousands of dollars—if their current Congressional pensions were switched to a controversial variant called a cash-balance pension.

One big loser, for example, would be Representative Rob Portman, a major sponsor of the House Republicans' pension legislation. He had built up a pension benefit worth \$337,857 by the end of 2002, if taken as a single payment, the study found. But if Mr. Portman had instead earned his benefits under a cash-balance plan, he would get \$239,185, based on an age of 48 and 10 years of service.

Mr. Portman will turn 48 this year. (The study used approximate ages in calculating the hypothetical totals.)

The study, done by the Congressional Research Service, shows that other members of Congress would suffer losses of varying amounts, depending on their ages and years of service.

Congress will be deliberating on significant pension legislation in the coming months, including proposals that would affect benefit levels and the strength of the pension system itself. An especially contentious debate is looming over regulations proposed by the Bush administration on how companies could convert their traditional pension plans to the cash-balance variety.

The existing Congressional pension plan is generous, and no one is really planning to trade it in for a new, stripped-down version. For years, however, private-sector employers nationwide have been replacing traditional pension plans with newer ones that are generally meant to be less costly for the companies to offer, but that in many cases yield smaller benefits, or transfer all the risk to workers.

Seen in that context, the Congressional Research Service study shows how well members of Congress are insulated from some trends in the private sector.

Since the 1980's, hundreds of large companies have switched from traditional to cash-balance plans. These plans combine features of the traditional pension with yet another

type of retirement plan, the 401(k), in which employees manage their own retirement money and sometimes receive matching contributions from employers. They are called cash-balance plans because employees periodically receive notice of a hypothetical cash balance that they can track as it grows.

In theory, the cash-balance pension has virtues that make it superior to the 401(k): it is paid for and managed by the employer, and it is guaranteed by the federal government; a 401(k) has no such guarantee. But in the real world, companies that have converted traditional pension plans to the cash-balance variety have reduced some employees' retirement benefits sharply. The worst losses have generally befallen older workers.

Statistics on the trend are sketchy. But a 2002 audit of 60 corporate pension conversions by the Labor Department's Office of Inspector General found that in 13 cases—about 20 percent—workers were deprived of retirement benefits. They were losing about \$17 million a year because companies used improper calculations in making the conversions.

Extrapolating these lost benefits to the hundreds of pension conversions across the country, the office said, the affected workers "may be underpaid between \$85 million and \$199 million annually." The office called for heightened regulatory vigilance.

Even assuming proper calculations, cash-balance pensions can mean lower payments than in the traditional approach. Cash-balance plans differ from traditional plans, which are set up to let workers build the biggest part of their benefit in the years just before they retire. The idea was to promote worker loyalty by giving workers an incentive to stay with one company.

Many graying baby boomers in traditional plans may not know it, but now that they are passing 50 and amassing the bulk of their pensions—they are becoming very expensive to their employers. Companies that have converted to cash-balance pensions have been able to reduce labor costs by ending their traditional plans before many workers enter this high-accrual stage.

Cash-balance pensions build benefits more evenly over the course of a worker's career. For some people, they can yield larger benefits than traditional plans, particularly for younger workers who often jump from job to job.

In switching to cash-balance pensions, some companies have notified employees in technical jargon or euphemisms that have left workers clueless about what is really happening. But as older employees started to realize that the conversions could mean individual losses in the tens of thousands of dollars, they began to pepper the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission with age-discrimination complaints. Some have filed class-action lawsuits against their companies. The most prominent case, still pending, affects more than 140,000 employees at I.B.M.

In 1999, the Internal Revenue Service, which regulates pensions, placed a moratorium on conversions, to give specialists a chance to sort out their legality.

Now the Bush administration has proposed regulations that would settle the issue, laying out basic rules for making cash-balance conversions legal. Public comment will be accepted until Thursday, and hearings are scheduled for April 9. If the proposed regulations take effect, the moratorium will be lifted.

Critics of cash-balance plans fear that an end to the moratorium would prompt a flood of pension conversions. They and their advocates in Congress doubt that the regulations would adequately protect older workers.

"There are millions and millions of workers today who are scared to death that the pensions they have been promised, that they have worked their whole life for, will not come through," said Representative Bernard Sanders, a Vermont independent who has long opposed cash-balance pension conversions.

Proponents of cash-balance pensions have argued that conversions are usually harmless. They note that some companies have voluntarily sweetened their cash-balance plans after older workers complained.

In general, members of Congress who have served the longest would face the greatest losses if they were given a cash-balance payout.

Patrick J. Purcell, the Congressional Research Service economist who conducted the study, said he worked with each lawmaker's age and years of service without knowing whom the numbers applied to, "so there would be less reason for people to question the results."

He then used standard actuarial methods to compress each pension—normally taken as a lifelong stream of monthly checks—into a lump-sum payment.

Calculating the lump-sum value made comparison possible with cash-balance benefits, which are normally given in a single payment.

Mr. Purcell then calculated what the lawmakers' hypothetical cash-balance benefit would be if they had had such a pension from the day they entered Congress. That approach made for a more straightforward comparison and possibly gave an advantage to the cash-balance plan. In practice, some of the most harmful effects of pension conversions occur because employees undergo the change at midcareer.

Mr. Portman, the Ohio Republican, was unavailable for comment on the study. But a spokesman, Jim Morrell, noted that in 2001, Mr. Portman sponsored legislation requiring companies to notify employees of the way their benefits would be affected in cash-balance conversions. That bill is now law.

Senator Charles E. Grassley, Republican from Iowa and chairman of the Finance Committee, earned a pension worth \$508,266 under the existing plan, based on an age of 70 and 18 years of service. Under a cash-balance plan, he would have received only \$161,623, according to the study.

Mr. Grassley is also the former chairman of the Senate Special Committee on Aging and is active on pension issues. A spokeswoman, Jill Gerber, said Mr. Grassley could not comment on the new findings without seeing the study.

The study also found that Representative Tom DeLay, the House majority leader, had earned a benefit worth \$608,143 at the end of 2002 under the current plan. In a cash-balance plan, Mr. DeLay, a Texas Republican, would receive \$251,086 or 59 percent less, based on an age of 56 and 18 years of service.

Mr. DeLay did not respond to a request for comment.

Representative J. Dennis Hastert, the House speaker, qualified for a Congressional pension worth \$540,572 at the end of 2002. He would qualify for \$164,455 in a typical cash-balance plan, the study found, based on an age of 61 and 16 years of service.

Mr. Hastert's press secretary, John Feehery, questioned whether it was fair to single out members of Congress for scrutiny when the entire federal compensation system is skewed toward smaller paychecks and larger pensions compared with the private sector.

"The Treasury Department and Congress are looking at ways to make sure that any conversion is fair," he added. "But on the other hand, many companies, given the economic downturn, are faced with the possibility of not being able to offer any plan at

all. And that also would be bad for employees."

Ms. Gerber noted that pension conversions in Iowa, Senator Grassley's state, generally make it clear that companies are backing away from traditional pensions. In the mid-1970's there were about 1,100 pension plans in Iowa, she said, but now there are fewer than 400. With some companies deciding not to offer any pensions at all, she said, Mr. Grassley sees a need to find some balance between protecting workers' benefits and offering employers incentives to stay in the pension system.

"The anti-cash-balance people are just anti-cash-balance," she said. "But if you just make cash-balance plans illegal, what are the plan sponsors going to do?"

The Congressional Research Service, a nonpartisan branch of the Library of Congress, did the study at the request of Mr. Sanders, who has introduced legislation opposing cash-balance conversions in the past—none of it successful. He said he hoped the new findings would "show the hypocrisy" of colleagues who would let other people undergo pension conversions but would not have to suffer ill effects themselves.

"If they think a cash-balance plan is good enough for American workers, why don't they convert their own pensions?" he asked in an interview.

He said he intended to introduce legislation this week that would force Congress to put its money where its mouth is: it would require the conversion of all Congressional pensions to the cash-balance type if the legislators allow the administration's proposed regulations to go forward.

Mr. Sanders himself would lose 72 percent of his pension if that happened. Based on an age of 61, with 12 years of service, he qualified for a \$416,159 lump-sum payment at the end of 2002. In a cash-balance model, he would have received \$115,850.

He would not comment on the prospects for his cash-balance legislation. Perhaps more pragmatically, he said he would also introduce legislation to require companies converting their pensions to let each worker choose whether to keep the old plan or go with the cash-balance plan.

Some companies have done this voluntarily, he noted.

"Kodak has done that," he said. "Motorola has done that. CSX, which is the new secretary of the Treasury's company," had done that, he said, referring to John W. Snow, who was chief executive of CSX, the railway company, before Mr. Bush appointed him in December to replace Paul H. O'Neill. As Treasury secretary, Mr. Snow has authority over the proposed regulations.

All of those companies converted, Mr. Sanders said, "but they gave workers the choice."

AIR TRAFFIC RETIREMENT REFORM ACT OF 2003

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003. This legislation will grant air traffic controllers, and more specifically air traffic controller supervisors, the same treatment that Federal firefighters and law enforcement officers (LEOs) receive under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) and the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

Both the CSRS and the FERS provide early retirement benefits and require mandatory separation for safety-related occupations, including Federal firefighters, LEOs and air traffic controllers. Under both CSRS and FERS, firefighters/LEOs and controllers are eligible for retirement after 25 years of service or after becoming 50 years old and completing 20 years of service. Additionally, the annuities for firefighters, LEOs and controllers are higher than ordinary Federal employees under CSRS and FERS.

However, the current definition of an air traffic controller in both CSRS and FERS is limited to people who are actively engaged in directing air traffic or their immediate supervisors. As a result, air traffic controllers who are promoted to staff specialists or second level managers before they are eligible to retire lose all benefits currently guaranteed controllers under CSRS and FERS. Yet, firefighters and LEOs that are promoted to management positions do not need to make a similar sacrifice.

The Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003 amends the CSRS and FERS to provide a more expansive two-tier definition of air traffic controllers. The new definition will include both employees covered under the current definition of air traffic controllers and second level supervisors. Second level supervisors would be eligible for the same retirement benefits available to line-controllers.

The Air Traffic Retirement Reform Act of 2003 provides fairness and parity between air traffic controllers and other Federal safety professionals.

TRIBUTE TO BERNARD DOWIYOGO

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express condolences for the late Bernard Dowiyogo, President of Nauru, who passed away on March 9, 2003, in Washington, DC. The people of Nauru first elected President Dowiyogo to their parliament in 1973, only five years after achieving independence from Australia in 1968. Since then he was repeatedly elected to serve a number of successful terms as President of Nauru. The island nation of Nauru is a proud friend of the United States and a well respected neighbor of Guam in the Asia-Pacific community. I urge the Parliament of Nauru to put partisan differences aside and come together to commemorate the legacy of President Dowiyogo. I ask of this Congress that, in our prayers, we remember the family of President Dowiyogo, who is survived by his wife and four children.

BIRTH DEFECTS AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES PREVENTION ACT (H.R. 398)

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I don't know all of the reasons why this bill was pulled from the

suspension calendar today. But I hope it will be re-scheduled for our consideration soon. I support passage of this bill sponsored by my New Jersey colleague, Congressman MIKE FERGUSON. It will re-authorize the important work of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) within the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Statutory authorization for this particular national center expired at the end of Fiscal Year 2002.

But at the same time, I also want to underscore my concern that officials of the CDC and the National Center on Birth Defects do not currently intend to continue approximately \$1 million in annual funding beyond Fiscal Year 2003 for the New Jersey Center for Birth Defects Research and Prevention, which is located in the City of Trenton. This would be very short-sighted and inefficient.

The New Jersey Center is one of eight such state centers that CDC established in 1997, at the direction of Congress. Since then, they have been hard at work developing a statewide registry and database on the incidence of birth defects and linking them to new research. Continuing this important work will help us determine what factors might be causing birth defects. It could yield invaluable insights into whether exposure to certain environmental hazards, for example, contributes to birth defects.

Sadly, our nation is now confronting huge budget deficits for years to come. But the CDC and the National Center on Birth Defects should build upon their initial five-year investment and continue their modest funding for all of the state efforts already compiling this vital information to help determine what causes birth defects.

Doing all we can to prevent birth defects and to learn more about what contributes to them is not a partisan issue. Accordingly, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to sustain federal support for New Jersey and other states that have taken the lead in developing this tracking data, while also enabling more states to do so.

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF HUGH B. PRICE: AUTHOR, LAWYER, CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER, PUBLIC SERVANT

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to pay tribute to a great man who is retiring as the leader of one of our most cherished leadership organizations.

For the past nine years, Hugh B. Price has worked tirelessly to preserve and fortify the legacy of the National Urban League—the nation's oldest and largest community-based movement dedicated to moving African Americans into the social and economic mainstream. As president and chief executive officer of this ninety-two year old organization, Hugh Price's visionary leadership has prepared the Urban League Movement for a second century of leadership and service.

Given his successful tenure, it is only fitting that the Congress honor his accomplishments and thank him for his excellent stewardship.

It is a fact that Hugh's vision has increased the organizational, programmatic, and policy capacity of the National Urban League. Under his leadership, the League dramatically strengthened its fiscal performance and reached new heights in fundraising through strategic partnerships with corporations, foundations, and governmental agencies.

Under Hugh Price's talented leadership, signature Urban League Movement programs moved to the forefront of urban communities. One such program, the Campaign for African American Achievement, became synonymous with standards of academic excellence in urban schools across the country. This program provided positive reinforcement for young people who earn good grades through the National Achievers Society—a nationwide, community-based honors society recognizing children who have earned B averages or better in school.

Expanding upon its innovative work in the education arena, Mr. Price guided the National Urban League into a partnership with Scholastic, Inc., to create Read and Rise—a parent guide for helping children become proficient readers—and a companion public service campaign to spread the word about this free resource throughout the African American community.

Finally, Hugh Price's talented leadership positioned the Urban League Movement as a leading agenda setter of many policy issues affecting Americans. From education policy to affirmative action and racial profiling, Hugh B. Price inserted the National Urban League into the policy fray with fact-based arguments that often added new and thoughtful insight into strident policy debates.

His role as a master policy architect was also evidenced by his dedicated efforts to reconstitute the Washington office of the National Urban League into the Institute for Opportunity and Equality—a policy and research think tank that is quickly emerging as a leading information resource concerning issues important to African Americans.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am proud as Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus to stand before you today to laud the many accomplish-

ments of Hugh B. Price, thank him for his service, and wish him a heartfelt farewell as he transitions from his successful tenure as President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Urban League.

A TRIBUTE TO JACK BUCKLES

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I rise today to pay tribute to Jack H. Buckles on the occasion of his 80th birthday.

Jack was born in Watagua, Tennessee on March 12, 1923. He was raised in a strong Democrat family of eight sons and two daughters. Following the outbreak of World War II, Jack enlisted in the U.S. Navy. He served aboard LCT 666, making numerous landings of soldiers and equipment on Omaha Beach on D-Day, June 6, 1944. After being honorably discharged at the end of the war, Jack returned to his home in Tennessee, where he became the first member of his family to attend college. On August 18, 1947, he married Billie Roberta Leonard. Shortly after his marriage, Jack became a journeyman steamfitter, working on numerous Tennessee Valley Authority construction projects. In 1959, Jack moved his family to Frederick, Maryland.

Jack joined the Steamfitters Union 602 in Washington D.C., where he served for more than 35 years with professionalism and commitment. Recognized for his exceptional skill in his craft, Jack was identified as one of the pool of select union members assigned to duties at the White House and other highly sensitive federal job sites. He supported the expansion of the medical and pension plans for the rank and file which today is recognized as one of the model union programs in the building trades in the District of Columbia.

A long time resident of Frederick, Maryland, Jack has proven himself to be a pillar of his community, a strong leader in his church and

active in numerous community and service organizations. A life long Democrat, Jack has devoted himself to working for the advancement of the Democrat Party and Democrat candidates at the local and state level. He has been a member of the Christian Church of Frederick for more than 30 years, where he was selected by the congregation to serve as a Church Deacon.

Jack considers his family as his greatest achievement. A loving husband of over 55 years to Billie R. Buckles, they have one son, a daughter, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great admiration that I recognize Jack H. Buckles before this body of Congress and this nation today. His contributions to his community, his church, and his family have been immeasurably beneficial in the lives of many.

TRIBUTE TO JOEL IRWIN WOLFF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 12, 2003

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Joel Irwin Wolff who will be named Pioneer of the Year by Grays Harbor County, Washington on March 23, 2003.

Joel Wolff's father came to the United States from Germany and established Wolff's Department Store in Aberdeen, Washington, in 1897. Joel Wolff was born on September 26, 1908, and has spent his entire life in Grays Harbor County.

Joel Irwin Wolff has been the devoted husband of Ruth Kauffman Wolff for 65 years and he is the proud father of Susan Desmond of Portland, Oregon, and George Wolff of Hillsborough, California.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring a true pioneer and a great American, Joel Irwin Wolff.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the *Extensions of Remarks* section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, March 13, 2003 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

MARCH 14

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

Emerging Threats and Capabilities Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the posture of U.S. Joint Forces Command and the role of joint experimentation in force transformation, in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2004.

SR-22

MARCH 18

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine ballistic missile defense in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2004.

SD-106

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine the war on terrorism, focusing on diplomacy issues.

SD-419

Small Business and Entrepreneurship

To hold hearings to examine the practice of contract bundling in federal agency procurement, focusing on the loss of federal jobs in small business.

SR-428A

10 a.m.

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine proposals to regulate illegal Internet gambling.

SD-538

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold oversight hearings to examine water supply issues in the Western United States.

SD-366

Finance

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Mark W. Everson, of Texas, to be Commissioner of Internal Revenue.

SD-219

Environment and Public Works

Fisheries, Wildlife, and Water Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the President's proposed budget for fiscal year 2004 for the Fish and Wildlife Service.

SD-406

Appropriations

Military Construction Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine Base Realignment and Closure.

SD-138

4 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold a closed briefing to examine the current hostage situation in Columbia.

S-407 Capitol

MARCH 19

9:30 a.m.

Judiciary

To hold hearings to examine ethical regenerative medicine research and human reproductive cloning.

SD-226

Armed Services

Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine acquisition policy and outsourcing issues in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2004.

SR-222

Rules and Administration

To hold oversight hearings to examine the operations of the Secretary of the Senate and the Architect of the Capitol.

SR-301

10 a.m.

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Business meeting to consider S. 15, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the payment of compensation for certain individuals with injuries resulting from the administration of smallpox countermeasures, to provide protections and countermeasures against chemical, radiological, or nuclear agents that may be used in a terrorist attack against the United States, and to improve immunization rates by increasing the distribution of vaccines and improving and clarifying the vaccine injury compensation program, proposed legislation entitled "Lifespan Respite Care Act", "Pediatric Drugs Research Authority", "Caring for Children Act of 2003", "Genetics Information Non-discrimination Act of 2003", and pending nominations.

SD-430

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings to examine S. 424, to establish, reauthorize, and improve energy programs relating to Indian tribes, and S. 522, to amend the Energy Policy Act of 1992 to assist Indian tribes in developing energy resources.

SR-485

2:30 p.m.

Foreign Relations

East Asian and Pacific Affairs Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the effects and consequences of an emerging China.

SD-419

Armed Services

Strategic Forces Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Defense, focusing on strategic forces and policy.

SR-232A

3 p.m.

Armed Services

Personnel Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the National Guard and Reserve military and civilian personnel programs in review

of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2004.

SH-216

MARCH 20

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

To hold hearings to examine atomic energy defense activities of the Department of Energy, in review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2004.

SH-216

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine issues related to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's proposed rule on the Real Estate Settlement Procedures Act.

SD-538

Governmental Affairs

To hold hearings to examine possible terrorist threats on cargo containers.

SD-342

10 a.m.

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and the Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the President's budget request for fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Commerce.

S-146, Capitol

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

To hold hearings to examine the Washington Teacher's Union.

SD-430

Veterans' Affairs

To hold joint hearings with the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs to examine legislative presentations of AMVETS, American Ex-Prisoners of War, the Vietnam Veterans of America, the Military Officers Association of America, and the National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs.

345 Cannon Building

10:30 a.m.

Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

To hold hearings to examine the nomination of Vernon Bernard Parker, of Arizona, to be an Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.

SR-328A

2:30 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings to examine how to make embassies safer in areas of conflict.

SD-419

Armed Services

SeaPower Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine the U.S. Transportation Command in review of the Defense Authorization Request for fiscal year 2004.

SR-232A

MARCH 25

2:30 p.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

National Parks Subcommittee

To hold oversight hearings to examine National Trail designations and the potential impact of National Trails on private lands, communities, and activities within the viewshed of the trails, and S. 324, to amend the National Trails System Act to clarify Federal authority relating to land acquisition from willing sellers for certain trails in the National Trails System.

SD-366

MARCH 26

9:30 a.m.
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Business meeting to consider pending calendar business.

SD-430

10 a.m.
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
To hold hearings to examine the reauthorization of child nutrition programs.

SR-328A

Indian Affairs
To hold oversight hearings to examine the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, focusing on the role and funding of the National Indian Gaming Commission.

SH-216

2:30 p.m.

Armed Services
Strategic Forces Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 2004 for the Department of Defense, focusing on the Department of Energy's Office of Environmental Management and Office of Legacy Management.

SR-222

MARCH 27

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services
To hold hearings to examine the future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization; to be followed by closed hearings (in Room SH-219).

SH-216

10 a.m.

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine terrorism, focusing on public health response.

SD-430

APRIL 2

10 a.m.

Indian Affairs
To hold hearings to examine S. 556, to amend the Indian Health Care Improvement Act to revise and extend that Act.

SR-485

APRIL 8

10 a.m.

Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
To hold hearings to examine the Mammography Quality Standards Act.

SD-430