

changes the tax laws to increase the benefits of MSAs.

D. Repeals the 7.5 percent threshold for the deduction of medical expenses, thus making all medical expenses tax deductible.

By providing a wide range of options, this bill allows individual Americans to choose the method of financing health care that best suits their individual needs. Increasing frustration with the current health care system is leading more and more Americans to embrace this approach to health care reform. For example, a recent poll by the respected Zogby firm showed that over 80 percent of Americans support providing all Americans with access to a Medical Savings Account. I hope all my colleagues will join this effort to put individuals back in control of health care by cosponsoring the Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act.

A TRIBUTE TO SONIA BEDROSSIAN PELTEKIAN, 29TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT WOMAN OF THE YEAR—2003

**HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2003*

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Women's History Month. Each year, we pay special tribute to the accomplishments made by our nation's most distinguished women during the month of March. It is my great honor to recognize extraordinary women who are making a difference in my district.

I stand today, to recognize an outstanding woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Ms. Sonia Bedrossian Peltekian. Over the years, Sonia has been an outspoken advocate for the Armenian-American community.

Born in Jerusalem, Ms. Peltekian attended St. Joseph High School, graduating as valedictorian, and Terra Santa Girls' College where she majored in business administration and minored in music teaching and conducting. Sonia worked in Jerusalem as a music teacher at Terra Santa Boys College, a secretary at the United Nations Relief and Work Agency, and organist/choir director for Terra Santa Church.

In the 1970s, Sonia immigrated to the United States, became a United States citizen, and married Barkev Peltekian. She and her husband have two children, Lara and Paul. Her work experience includes a fourteen-year term as an administrative assistant for Blue Cross of California, piano teaching, and assisting in the family business, Barkev's Photography.

Ms. Peltekian volunteers for the United Armenia Fund, the American Red Cross and the Armenian Cultural Association. For nearly thirty years, she has been extremely active in the Armenian Relief Society, Western Region "Mayr" Chapter in Los Angeles, serving as President and Vice President. In 1998, Sonia won the County of Los Angeles' Outstanding Volunteer Award for her service to refugees living in Los Angeles County. In addition, she volunteers at various schools and community functions to speak about issues related to Armenian culture, women and religious holidays. Her command of four languages: English, Armenian, Arabic and French help to make her a much sought-after public speaker and volunteer.

Throughout the years, Sonia has focused on using her knowledge to enhance opportunities for the Armenian-American community, which has greatly benefited from her devoted service.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring a remarkable woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Sonia Bedrossian Peltekian. The entire community joins me in thanking Ms. Peltekian for her efforts.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO DR. RALPH QUELLHORST, OHIO CONFERENCE MINISTER FOR HIS DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE STATE OF OHIO

**HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 13, 2003*

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay special tribute to an outstanding gentleman, and good friend, from Ohio. Dr. Ralph Quellhorst became an Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ in 1962. Shortly thereafter he became an Adjunct Professor at Ohio Northern University in Ada, Ohio. Dr. Quellhorst served on its faculty from 1963–1965. Also during that time, Dr. Quellhorst led the congregation of the Emmanuel United Church of Christ in Bluffton, Ohio.

Mr. Speaker, in 1967, Dr. Quellhorst became the Associate for Leadership Development for the Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ. He served in that capacity until 1975, during which time he also served the Eden Theological Seminary as an Adjunct Professor. In 1975, Dr. Quellhorst left Ohio for New York City to serve as an Associate in the Office for Church Life and Leadership, UCC. During his service in New York City, Dr. Quellhorst served as an Adjunct Professor in the New York Theological Seminary.

From 1982 through 1992, Dr. Quellhorst served under the Indiana Kentucky Conference, United Church of Christ, in Indianapolis, Indiana. Finally, in 1993, Dr. Quellhorst returned to the great state of Ohio to serve as Conference Minister and Executive for the Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ, from which he is retiring this month.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Quellhorst boasts quite a long list of educational and professional achievements. His first degree was obtained in my congressional district at Heidelberg College, located in Tiffin, Ohio. There he received his B.A. in Speech. In 1962, he received his B. Div. from the Eden Theological Seminary, where he later obtained his M. Div. in 1974. Dr. Quellhorst completed his education in 1976, when he received his D. Min. from the Eden Theological Seminary. Dr. Quellhorst serves on the Heidelberg College Board of Trustees, where he has chaired the Academic Affairs, Faculty and Curriculum, Institutional Advancement, and Executive committees. He recently served on the Heidelberg Presidential Search Committee. In addition to his contributions in the academic realm, Dr. Quellhorst has been recognized for his humanitarian efforts. In 2000, he was awarded the John Calvin Award for Humanitarian Work, which was presented at the 4th World Congress of the

Hungarian Reformed Churches held in Budapest, Hungary.

Dr. Ralph Quellhorst has had a significant impact on the lives of so many people. He has helped so many in the congregations he has served to live a life of goodwill and sacrifice. These chances to give back to the public have brought him a lifetime of both personal and professional achievement. Ohio is certainly blessed to have had Dr. Quellhorst's voice touch the lives of so many in our state.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Dr. Ralph Quellhorst. Our communities are served well by having such honorable and giving citizens, like Dr. Quellhorst, who care about their well being and stability. We wish him, his wife, Sue, and their family all the best as we pay tribute to one of our state's finest citizens.

Mr. Speaker, it is doubtful that H.R. 663, the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act, will in fact improve the quality of medical care. What is not doubtful is that HR 663 will increase the federal government's control over medicine, which I believe is the most dangerous trend facing medicine today. Under H.R. 663, federally-empowered boards and commissions will be empowered to establish new medical databases on patient errors, develop standards for health care information technology systems, and issue new federal standards regarding the packaging of drugs and biological products. Supporters of this bill will claim that compliance with the standards promulgated is voluntary; however, medical administrators will feel pressure to adhere to the federal guidelines for no other reason than to avoid jeopardizing their federal funding. Furthermore, it is questionable how long Congress will allow the standards to remain voluntary. After all, if the federal government is using taxpayer dollars to determine the best means of protecting patients, than we "owe" it to the taxpayer to make sure all practitioners are following federal standards!

Supporters of having the federal government determine the standards for patient safety believe that the federal government is capable of determining the best ways to enhance patient safety. However, Mr. Speaker, it is unlikely that the federal government can effectively identify and popularize a definitive list of best practices for a field as diverse and rapidly changing as medicine. In fact, by the time such standards make their way through what is certain to be a lengthy bureaucratic approval process, the standards are likely to be out of date! Furthermore, the standards will inevitably reflect the bias of those chosen to be on the patient safety boards. However, many practitioners will no doubt feel discouraged from adopting medical error reduction techniques not on the "approved government list." Thus, the main effect of federalizing the process of developing standards of patient quality will be to retard the development of those standards.

I am also concerned about the possible violations of privacy that inevitably accompany the government collection of medical data. Of course, the supporters of this bill claim that the reporting will not disclose any personal information. However, even medical systems which claim not to collect personal identifiable information can threaten privacy. This is because those with access to the information can oftentimes identify the subject of the "anonymous" report. I am aware of at least