DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill. (H.R. 2691) making appropriations for the Department of the Interior and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes:

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong opposition to the amendment by my colleague from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO). Wildfires are a serious problem but we should not be undercutting an investment in our future. Build fewer roads in our national forests and I'll bet you'll have more money to fight forest fires and maybe even have fewer forest fires to fight.

Mr. Chairman, this is a cynical amendment. Why target just the NEA? What has NEA done to deserve such spitefulness? Since its creation in 1965, the NEA has issued more than tens of thousands of grants. Of this total, fewer than 20 have been considered controversial. Match that 20 against grant recipients who received 35 of the past 46 National Book Awards, National Book Critics Circle Awards and Pulitzer Prizes in fiction and poetry since 1990.

Match it against the grant recipients of PBS's Great Performances who were nominated for 121 Emmys and won 51 Emmys. The arts are vitally important to the intellectual and cultural growth of our nation. The contributions that the National Endowment for the Arts have made to such efforts are significant and should be permitted to continue at an even higher funding level. It has worked to enrich American life and culture by promoting knowledge of artistic endeavor, thought and culture throughout the nation. The endowment accomplishes this mission by providing grants for high-quality artistic projects.

Great performances or small, NEA has supported hundreds of professional orchestras, dance companies, and nonprofit theaters, where before NEA's support there were none. As a member of the Subcommittee on Interior Appropriations, I have been privileged to learn more about the NEA through congressional hearings and outside witnesses. Federal funding for music, dance, theater, literature and visual arts is not just about quality of life; it's about investments to fulfill our human and economic potential.

By directing funds toward culturally diverse, educational, community-oriented programs, for example, we provide places where at-risk youth can express themselves creatively rather than destructively. The small seed money NEA provides is an investments in communities across the country that will pay us back many fold in rich dividends. Today, we have a chance to increase our investment funding for this worthwhile program, not retreat from it.

I urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment.

TRIBUTE TO MR. PETER SMITH

HON. JOHN LEWIS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a great contributor to civil rights and to the empowerment of people in this country. Peter Smith has worked for almost forty years to promote civil rights and to provide legal services to those who have traditionally been denied such access—African Americans and other minorities, the poor, juveniles, and those with disabilities.

In his Cornell Law School graduating class, he was one of the very few who chose to turn their backs on the prestige and financial rewards that would come to those who entered private law practice. In a period of our history where the fashion was ''me first'', Mr. Smith has without exception put ''you first.'' And for four decades, the ''you'' was individuals who for reasons of race, poverty, age or disability were denied equal access.

In 1964, having worked there earlier during law school, Mr. Smith joined the staff of the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice. As a member of the small and elite Appeals and Research Section, he wrote and argued appeals in some of the most significant cases in the civil rights struggle of the 1960s and played a role in drafting the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

In 1966, again breaking new ground, Peter Smith joined the first legal services appellate section in the nation. He argued before the Supreme Court of the United States the landmark case that brought an end to welfare residence requirements. The work that he did in public housing and welfare reform continues to this day to promote the quality of lives of those people who are dependent upon government policy for their very survival.

After five years of working to deliver legal services to those who, because they were poor or minorities, were denied access to such services, Mr. Smith concluded that the problems would never be solved unless the private bar was brought into the struggle. After much effort, he convinced an establishment Baltimore law firm to open a branch office in Baltimore's inner city that would deliver legal services to the underserved the same way the rest of the firm delivered legal services to the privileged. That office, under Smith's leadership, became a model for a number of other law firms in the country.

In 1972, Mr. Smith joined the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Law and, almost immediately, created one of the first clinical legal education programs in the nation—a program with two parallel goals. The first goal was to change the way that law students were educated, by creating an opportunity for students to practice law, representing clients, while under very close supervision—a model that the medical community had long used. The second, and equally important goal was to deliver legal services to a class of people who ordinarily did not have access to such services—juveniles. Smith operated the Juvenile Law Clinic until 1979, representing many clients in administrative and judicial proceedings including before the Supreme Court of the United States where he helped to guarantee key legal rights for juveniles.

Almost without exception, the students who went through his clinic consider that experience to be the most significant of their law school education. In 1979 he spent a sabbatical in England helping to develop clinical legal education there.

In 1991, Smith returned to his childhood home in New Hampshire where he assumed a new challenge—to provide legal services to yet another segment of American society that traditionally had been denied that access—individuals with disabilities whose legal problems were related to their disability. For the last few years Mr. Smith has narrowed that focus even more, representing parents of children with disabilities in cases where the school district was not complying with federal law.

Mr. Speaker, on April 27th, Peter Smith celebrated his 65th birthday. While he continues to actively practice law, delivering legal services to those who have so long been denied that access, I did not want this occasion to pass without acknowledging his long service promoting civil rights for minorities, the poor and the disabled.

TRIBUTE TO JOE MARTIN

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD a story from The Charlotte Observer about Joe Martin, a friend since college days, who was diagnosed nine years ago with ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Today, Joe says, ''I do not have ALS. I had it.'' Joe wants to change the ''doomsday'' mentality about ALS, and show that people can survive, as he has for the last nine years. Joe, in fact, has not only survived but has published two books, an autobiography and a novel, and is at work on a third.

Many members will remember Rep. Jim Martin, who left Congress to serve as Governor of North Carolina. Joe is Jim Martin's brother. As you will see from the article, Joe Martin and his wife, Joan, are establishing a web page which may be of interest to Members with constituents who have ALS.

[From The Charlotte Observer, July 23, 2003]

JOE MARTIN TACKLES HIS NEXT CAUSE

(By David Perlmutt)

He can't talk, he can't walk, he can't move a single body part except for a finger, eyes and a few facial muscles, but Joe Martin is on yet another crusade.

Nine years after he was diagnosed with ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, the former bank executive and now novelist wants to change the thinking about the disease that paralyzed him and, according to that doomsday thinking, should have killed him.

These days, he discusses his illness in the past tense. Martin, 63, is living proof, he says, that people can live—and don't have to die—with ALS.

''For any practical purpose, I do not have ALS. I had it,'' Martin responded by e-mail. ''* * * My survival is just a fact, almost a foregone conclusion.''

Soon, he and wife Joan plan to post a new Web site that takes ''positive'' messages to ALS patients—despite doctors telling them they will die within two to five years.