

on budgetary matters. I believe that discipline must come from the White House. Congress can no longer afford runaway tax cuts and corporate welfare while neglecting long-term fiscal solvency and current priorities like health care and education.

What Chairman Greenspan neglected to state was that the President's reckless disregard for fiscal responsibility led to a \$521 billion deficit in FY 2004. When President Bush took office in 2001, he inherited a projected \$5.6 trillion surplus over ten years. Just three short years later, we have a projected \$1.9 trillion deficit, a shocking turnaround. While the President was dealt a difficult hand with a recession and the attacks of September 11, many of the fiscal woes are a result of repeated tax cuts that benefit the wealthiest Americans. Our promise to seniors has been bypassed in order to line the pockets of the President's wealthy friends.

Every man, woman, and child in Rhode Island and around the country would owe more than \$24,000 if we were to erase the national debt today. Due to increasing deficits, this amount is only going to increase until we take serious steps to cut wasteful government spending and collect the revenue to meet America's priorities and promises. Baby boomers will challenge the Social Security system, but through responsible fiscal policy, the government will be able to keep this program afloat.

Ensuring the solvency is not the task of one person or one party. Saving Social Security will require difficult decisions, but we cannot play politics with Americans' futures. More than anything, we need an Administration that respects fiscal responsibility and recognizes that in a time of war and recession, we should not be giving trillion-dollar tax cuts to the most privileged Americans. I urge my colleagues to reject Chairman Greenspan's calls to cut benefits to our nation's seniors and instead work to restore fiscal responsibility to our government.

#### HONORING HAHNVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**HON. W.J. (BILLY) TAUZIN**  
OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, February 25, 2004*

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to offer my congratulations to the Hahnville High School Tigers football team of Boutte, Louisiana for winning the Louisiana 5A Football Championship game on December 13, 2003 in the New Orleans Superdome.

Led by their head coach, Lou Valdin, the Hahnville Tigers capped off a fairytale season when they defeated the Evangel Eagles 41–35. This year's win marks the school's sixth state championship title, the most recent in 1994, and seals off their perfect 15–0 season. It also gives Lou Valdin his first state title as a head coach.

On their march to this year's championship, the Tigers defeated Fountainebleau, Barbe, Higgins, and Carencro in the playoffs before meeting Evangel in finals. The championship game was a great effort by both teams, but in the end the Hahnville Tigers came away the victors.

I am proud to report that during the championship game the Tigers compiled over 450

total yards on offense on an Evangel defense that had only allowed just over 230 yards per game this season. I would especially like to note the efforts of three key offensive players: Darius Reynaud, Bryant Lee and Craig Turner. Reynaud and Lee both tied 5A Prep Classic records and Reynaud was named the Player of the Game by the media. Reynaud rushed for 184 yards on 31 carries and two touchdowns. He also led the Tigers in receiving yards with 86 on three receptions and a touchdown. Those three touchdowns tied a 5A Prep Classic record for most touchdowns and most points scored. This championship game was monumental in so many ways for both teams. The two teams broke or tied 27 5A Prep Classic records, including most points scored by two teams.

The whole effort was aided by Principal Barbara Fuselier, and all of the students, staff and parents of Hahnville High School who have shown their support for the players and coaches. It was truly a community effort that accomplished this great victory. I would like to commend all of the players and coaches who have shown true dedication to their sport, and I am extremely proud of their accomplishment. It is with great pride that we congratulate and wish them luck in all their future endeavors.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2004

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, February 25, 2004*

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the "Congressional Gold Medal Program Enhancement Act of 2004." Passage of this legislation will ensure that the medals Congress confers will continue to honor truly exceptional achievement.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Congress created the Congressional Gold Medal honor in 1776 to recognize military leaders, and then honored George Washington for his heroic service in the Revolutionary War. Since then, the medal program has evolved to become the highest civilian honor Congress confers, and medals have gone to those who have attained exceptional achievement, including General Douglas MacArthur; General Colin Powell; Mother Teresa; Pope John Paul II; British Prime Ministers Winston Churchill and Tony Blair; Jonas Salk; Robert H. Goddard and Rosa Parks.

However, a disturbing trend has started to emerge in which Congress approves numerous medals each year, and in some cases approves medals for groups rather than individuals. Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that either of these trends is in the spirit of the gold medal concept. This legislation seeks to clarify guidelines under which the medals may be awarded, and strengthen the honor of the process.

Under the new guidelines, Congressional Gold Medals could only be awarded to an individual, not to a group. While there are many groups of people deserving recognition, I believe the medal should be awarded for outstanding, individual achievement.

Also under this legislation, no more than two medals could be awarded in any single year.

A similar limitation has worked extraordinarily well for the commemorative coin programs struck by the United States Mint: under reform legislation I authored and Congress passed in 1995, only two coin programs may be conducted in any year. This reform improved the commemorative coin honor and similar standards could improve the process for awarding the Congressional Gold Medal.

It concerns me, Mr. Speaker, that limiting the number of coin programs a year but having no limitation on Congressional Gold Medals—we award five or six in some years—could someday devalue the medals. Mr. Speaker, this is a simple piece of legislation with great meaning. It will ensure the future integrity and true honor of the award. It is my goal that each recipient—President, civil rights leader, military hero, inventor, noted healer—who receives a Congressional Gold Medal will remain part of a unique honor, bestowed by the U.S. Congress.

Mr. Speaker, few can argue with the idea that these medals are an important indicator of American appreciation and gratitude. To maintain this standard, I will work to move the "Congressional Gold Medal Program Enhancement Act" quickly, in order to take effect at the beginning of the next Congress. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation and look forward to working with the Financial Services Committee to bring this bill to the House Floor.

**PATRICK PHELAN 2003 GATORADE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BOYS SOCCER PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

**HON. RICHARD E. NEAL**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
*Wednesday, February 25, 2004*

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Patrick Phelan, of Wilbraham & Monson Academy, on his selection as the 2003 Gatorade National High School Player of the Year in Boys Soccer. Out of the more than 300,000 young men across the country who play soccer, he was selected for this prestigious award based on athletics, academic achievement, and overall character. This selection, which has been given out for nineteen years in ten different sports, places him in the elite company of highly regarded athletes such as NFL co-MVP Peyton Manning, U.S. Olympic Gold Medallist Marion Jones, and basketball stars Lisa Leslie and LeBron James.

Gatorade is not the first to sing the praises of Patrick Phelan, though. His coach, Gary Cook, refers to him as, "the best player I have coached in my twenty eight years in high school." Beyond being an amazing player, Patrick is also an important leader on the team. According to Cook, "everyday he trains with a purpose and he makes everyone around him better. He was a great captain and teammate."

As a defender, Patrick scored six goals and was attributed with five assists this past season. Along with his on-field performance, the leadership he provided in his role as team captain helped elevate the team to a 12–1–2 regular season and a berth in the Class B New England Prep School Semi-Finals.

Patrick does more than play soccer, though. Academically, he stands out with a grade point