

constructed at the facility were molded at the Mound City Foundry. At the outset of the Civil War in 1861, the U.S. Government leased the Marine Ways facility for \$40,000 a year. This facility in Mound City was used by the government to build and repair ships and to convert steamships into armored vessels. It was at the Marine Ways site that the USS *Cairo*, the USS *Mound City* and USS *Cincinnati* were constructed under the direction of James Eads. These gunboats or "ironclads" were used by the Federal Government during the decisive river conflicts of the Civil War, particularly the capture of the confederate facility at Fort Donelson in Stewart County, TN. In fact, Andrew Foote's flagship, the USS *Benton* was serviced at the Marine Ways complex.

In 1863, the Federal Government took possession of additional property fronting the river to be used for a naval station together with the adjacent rail depot. One of the warehouses built by the Emporium Company was converted into a naval hospital.

The hospital treated thousands of Union soldiers and was the largest hospital facility in the Union's western campaign. After the Civil war, the hospital served many uses but was eventually destroyed by fire. Many of the soldiers who had died being treated at the hospital were buried nearby and the government created the Mound City National Cemetery there in 1862 where over 5000 soldiers are buried.

Also affiliated with Mound City during the Civil War is the story of the USS *Red Rover*, the first hospital ship of the U.S. Navy. Originally a confederate side-wheel steamer, the *Rover* was captured by the crew of the USS *Mound City* in 1862 when it was hit by another Union ship. It was then refitted as a hospital ship. The *Red Rover* Hospital Ship entered service and during a battle in Arkansas in July 1862, the USS *Mound City* was struck and many crewmembers were injured, the *Red Rover* came to their aid and transported them to the Mound City Naval Hospital. Some of the *Red Rover's* female personnel were the first to serve on a naval vessel. Though not in operation today, the boatyard is still present in Mound City.

In 1861, Pulaski County moved its county seat from Caledonia to Mound City as recognition of the growth and development of the town and its strategic importance during the Civil War. Fire in 1879 destroyed the courthouse and flooding was a constant problem for the community. It was during this time that the city strengthened its levee system and flood waters never entered the city from 1868 to 1936. In January, 1937 a record flood on the Ohio breached its levees and inflicted much damage to the community. As a result of that flood, the community strengthened its levees.

Mound City today is a community of over 600 and remains a vital part of the economy of Pulaski County and southernmost Illinois. The community serves as a key tourist attraction for southern Illinois with a restored historic courthouse, national cemetery, and Civil War attractions. Pulaski County continues to promote economic development by creating a business environment conducive to further development. Mound City is part of the Southernmost Illinois Delta Empowerment Zone, an Illinois Enterprise Zone and the Delta Regional Economic Development Authority.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the founding of the community and

the people of Mound City, IL, on the occasion of its 150th anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO JORDIE TATTER

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2004

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dear friend of mine, Jordie Tatter, who unexpectedly passed away in January 2003. Today, I am pleased that the conference center at the Southwest Michigan Research and Extension Center is being dedicated to Jordie. This is a great honor for my friend; however because of votes in the House today, I can not be at the dedication ceremony this afternoon in Berrien County.

As this dedication confirms, Jordie was a giant in the agricultural and natural resources industries. His commitment and enthusiasm to excellence in the field of agriculture was unmatched, whether it be at the local, national, and yes, even international level. He truly embodied the heart and soul of southwest Michigan, and I am blessed to have formed a close friendship. I looked at this friendship, not only as a source of console and inspiration, but also as a true compass of direction in greater understanding and appreciation of our community.

I have never met a man more passionate or knowledgeable toward the industry he loved—Michigan agriculture. Jordie was always willing to lend his extensive knowledge to those interested, and his great mind benefited all who had the pleasure of crossing his path. I was fortunate enough to call Jordie a close friend. During the time that I had with him, I relied on his insight and intelligence. He was kind and supportive—even more so when times were tough. Jordie's love of his work, the outdoors, the Farm Bureau, and Michigan State University, will be deeply remembered and this dedication is yet another reminder of his immense impact on our community.

We all miss Jordie greatly but his legacy lives on at the Extension Center, as others continue to follow in his footsteps in the agriculture community. He will always live on through our many wonderful memories that will not fade away.

INTRODUCTION OF AGE-OUT FIX FOR ADOPTED FOREIGN CHILDREN

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2004

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, many American families bring new children into their lives through foreign adoption. Some do so to help orphans in countries unable to meet the needs of abandoned children while others adopt for more personal reasons.

Families spend years of effort, thousands of dollars, and more importantly, become emotionally attached to the child they adopt. Unfortunately, because of odd provisions in the immigration code, in rare cases adoptive parents find there is no way to gain legal immigration status for the child they have adopted from overseas.

Current law allows foreign children adopted by American citizens to attain legal immigration status and citizenship through their adoptive parents. To do so, the adoptions must be finalized by the age of 16 for immigration purposes. However, some adoptions can be very long and difficult processes, especially international adoptions. An adoption initiated at age 14 or even earlier can sometimes only be finalized after age 16. In that case, the child who has been adopted will be denied legal immigration status to stay with their adoptive family, unlike children whose adoptions were finalized sooner.

Often, American parents seek help by approaching their Member of Congress to seek a private relief bill so their child can stay with the family. But there is a better way than dealing with these tragic cases on such a haphazard basis.

Today I am introducing a bill to straighten out this problem. By simply changing the current requirement that adoptions be finalized before the adoptee's 16th birthday, to requiring that adoptions be initiated before the 16th birthday, these terrible cases will be avoided. In this way, children whose adoptions have been time-consuming may still obtain U.S. immigration status through their adoptive parents like other adoptees. Bureaucratic delay should not be the reason parents are separated from their adopted children.

Congress has considered and granted private relief for some children in these difficult situations whose parents are lucky enough to get a private relief bill introduced and passed in Congress. Rather than approach this problem in a piecemeal fashion through private relief bills, I hope this Congress will work together to quickly pass this important bill and provide relief to many American families who only want the chance to begin their new life with an adopted child.

MEDICARE DISCOUNT CARD PROGRAM

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2004

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to insert into the RECORD testimony submitted by the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare to the Senate Finance Committee regarding the new Medicare discount card program. This statement correctly identifies some of the concerns Seniors have with discount cards and the Medicare Prescription Drug Law in general.

Mr. Chairman, we believe the problems evident in the discount card program have provided Congress with a unique opportunity to correct the flaws in the new Medicare bill before it goes into effect.—Barbara B. Kennelly, President and CEO, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare.

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD—SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE, MEDICARE DRUG CARD: DELIVERING SAVINGS FOR PARTICIPATING BENEFICIARIES, JUNE 8, 2004

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: On behalf of the 3.2 million members and supporters of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, we applaud Chairman Grassley and Senator Baucus for holding this hearing today. We

have discovered through many meetings with seniors around the country that they remain confused and skeptical about the new discount card program. This is unfortunate, because there are some seniors—particularly those who qualify for the low-income benefit—who will clearly benefit from the new discount cards. In our written materials and many meetings, we have urged seniors everywhere to research the cards and determine whether they will benefit from them. We welcome hearings such as this, because we believe they can provide critical information to millions of seniors struggling to understand the new benefit.

Unfortunately, we believe most of the problems with the new cards are inherent in the design of the program and cannot be corrected by the end of 2005. More importantly, we believe the discount cards are a metaphor for the entire new Medicare law. Unless the law is rewritten, the same fundamental flaws that have made the discount cards so frustrating to seniors today will make the new drug benefit equally disappointing when it becomes effective in 2006, and could undermine public support for the entire Medicare program.

The National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare spent the last six years advocating for a comprehensive, affordable prescription drug benefit offered through the Medicare program, because that is what our seniors have been telling us they need and we believe they deserve. If Congress had worked directly through Medicare rather than a system of private providers to provide both the temporary discount card and the permanent drug benefit, it could have taken advantage of the universal, consistent, inexpensive delivery system that is already inherent in the Medicare program. The result would have been a simple, meaningful benefit to seniors.

Unfortunately, that is not what has been implemented through P.L. 108-173. We understand that the wide variety of discount card providers was intended as a service to seniors, to give them the broadest array of card choices. But instead of providing a benefit to seniors, the multitude of options has proved to be extremely confusing, particularly with so few seniors comfortable using the Internet. Allowing sponsors of the cards to change both the drugs covered and the discounts on the drugs weekly was intended to encourage competition between providers, further lowering prices. But experience to date has shown the listed prices can go up as well as down, and even those seniors who research the cards carefully cannot be certain they will end up with the best deal. Meanwhile, because seniors are only allowed to have one Medicare-approved card at a time, and they are locked into their chosen card until the end of the year, they worry about being forced to stay with a plan that ultimately does not provide them with significant benefits. This worry can result in paralysis, with seniors preferring not to purchase a card at all rather than risk buying one that does not serve their needs.

This problem will be exacerbated when the permanent benefit begins. We do not know today how many companies will opt to provide the permanent prescription drug benefit in 2006, so it is not clear whether seniors will be faced with a choice between as many providers. Even if the number of options is smaller, however, their choices will be even more complicated than with the discount card. Not only will they be confronted with a confusing array of multiple providers covering different drugs at a variety of prices, in some cases they will also be faced with choosing between managed care companies with completely different menus of standard health services as well.

If they choose wrong in the case of the discount card, their only loss is the price of the card and whatever discounts they might have received with a different card. But if they pick a health care provider that does not serve their needs once the permanent benefit begins, the financial consequences could be catastrophic. And unlike the discount card, where taking time to make the right choice does not have adverse consequences, seniors delaying enrollment in the permanent benefit could pay increased premiums for the rest of their lives.

But the most significant problem with the new Medicare law, Mr. Chairman, is the lack of cost containment. As you know, most seniors are on relatively fixed incomes, dependent upon Social Security for a significant portion of their income in retirement. They are extremely sensitive to price increases because they rarely have a cushion of disposable income to protect them from the ravages of inflation. They are well aware of the skyrocketing increases in prescription drug costs that have been confirmed in two recent studies. Families USA found prices of the 30 most popular drugs used by seniors increased at four times the rate of general inflation during 2003, and AARP found a 28% increase in a broader list of drugs from 2000 to 2003. Small wonder that seniors are less than impressed by a discount card program that offers reductions of 10 to 25 percent.

CMS has said it intends to monitor the cards to make sure senior discounts are not based on artificially inflated prices, but without a clear definition of what is an acceptable price increase, and considering the issues of artificially inflated prices represented by Average Wholesale Prices, protecting seniors will not be easy. And we are not aware of any federal agency investigating the significant increases prescription drug prices have experienced in recent years, to determine whether those increases were warranted in the first place.

If the new prescription drug benefit is offered through Medicare, the purchasing power of its 41 million seniors can be harnessed to negotiate for the lowest possible prices, with all the savings passed along directly to seniors. But without effective cost containment, the new prescription drug benefit could well turn out to be an illusion for many seniors, offering limited federal assistance in paying for drugs whose cost keeps skyrocketing unchecked, much as the discount card program appears to many seniors today. And unfortunately, the drug benefit that looks meager today will only become worse with time. According to Medicare's own Trustees, within a few short years seniors will need to have over \$8,580 in covered drug costs to trigger the catastrophic coverage. At that point, seniors will be paying over \$6,000 in out-of-pocket costs, in addition to an estimated \$730 in annual premiums, and only \$2,500 will be picked-up by Medicare.

Many in Congress, including you, Mr. Chairman, have acknowledged the lack of cost containment in the new prescription drug program by advocating for reimportation of drugs from Canada and other countries. While the National Committee supports reimportation, we believe any relief it offers will be temporary.

Mr. Chairman, we believe the problems evident in the discount card program have provided Congress with a unique opportunity to correct the flaws in the new Medicare bill before it goes into effect. We urge you to revisit the program while there is still time to make the fundamental changes that will be needed to provide seniors with the kind of access to affordable drugs that they truly require. We look forward to working with you toward this goal as the process continues.

HARRY BELAFONTE RECEIVING
THE GLOBAL EXCHANGE HUMAN
RIGHTS AWARD

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, June 14, 2004

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Belafonte both a friend and mentor as he receives the Global Exchange Human Rights Award. I share his passion for civil rights, social justice, peace, lifting the embargo on Cuba, and eradicating poverty both abroad and at home.

Recently, I introduced legislation to create a national Caribbean-American Heritage Month, and Mr. Belafonte was a primary influence in developing this legislation. Born in New York, but raised in Jamaica, Mr. Belafonte served our country and beyond in many ways; throughout his career, Mr. Belafonte has worked to unite the international community for just causes.

When people think of Mr. Belafonte, they may remember him for his album *Calypto* being the first to sell over 1 million copies with his hit *Banana Boat*, or they may reminisce of his scenes as the co-star in the historic adaptation of Bizet's opera, *"Carmen"* titled *"Carmen Jones."*

Many will recall Mr. Belafonte marching alongside Dr. Martin Luther King and leaders of the Civil Rights Movement. Dr. King was later to say, "Belafonte's global popularity and his commitment to our cause is a key ingredient to the global struggle for freedom and a powerful tactical weapon in the Civil Rights movement here in America."

Belafonte was named to the Board of Directors of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), and at Dr. King's death, he became one of three executors of the great leader's estate. I commend him for his tireless efforts in championing the rights of people here in the United States and beyond.

Showing that his talents were not limited to making history in just music and politics, Mr. Belafonte became the first African-American producer in television. His company went on to produce one Emmy-nominated success after another for the three major networks—"The Strollin' Twenties," written by the famed author Langston Hughes, starring such great performers as Sidney Poitier, Diahann Carroll, Sammy Davis, Jr. and Duke Ellington and "A Time for Laughter," featuring Richard Pryor, Redd Foxx, Moms Mabley and Pigmeat Markham. The format of this special set became the model for the TV comedy series, "Laugh-In."

In 1960 he was named by President John F. Kennedy as cultural advisor to the Peace Corps; this position inspired Mr. Belafonte's development of our similar passion for the people of the African continent. Twenty-five years later, Mr. Belafonte won an Emmy for the all-star *We Are the World* video, calling global attention to war and famine crises throughout Africa.

Two years later, he was appointed as UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador, only the second American to hold that title. In this capacity, Mr. Belafonte created an historic symposium in Dakar, Senegal for the immunization of African children. The positive response to this symposium led to a successful campaign