

HONORING THE STUDENTS OF
EAST BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
COMPETING IN THE WE THE
PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN AND THE
CONSTITUTION PROGRAM

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the students of East Brunswick High School that recently won the national finals for the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program. The participating students from East Brunswick High School, after winning the statewide competition, represented New Jersey in this year's final. Through their hard work and determination, the national finals competitors earned the opportunity to visit and compete in our nation's capital. East Brunswick High School was the defending champion and I am proud to say that they have achieved this high level of excellence again this year. They won because they are articulate, have presence of mind, and can think on their feet, and because they know the U.S. Constitution inside and out.

The students of East Brunswick came a long way to earn the right to compete in Washington. To participate, every student needed to learn about a variety of concepts ranging from the philosophical origins of the Constitution to its role and interpretation in today's society. After spending countless hours reading primary and secondary sources, the students created a four minute presentation to answer the question posed to them about the Constitution. The students then formulated their own opinions, which needed to be defended during six minutes of questioning from judges. The judging is based on the students understanding of constitutional principles and their knowledge of both historical and contemporary issues. At the national competition, the judges are practicing lawyers, college professors, as well as current and former State Supreme Court judges.

The education of our youth about our democracy and the meaning and importance of our Constitution is imperative. As important as it is to have a basic knowledge of the laws and interpretations of the Constitution, it is equally as important to understand the reasons for which they were created. Every United States citizen should know and understand these fundamental principles, and through participation in this program, the students from East Brunswick High School have accomplished just that. These competitors serve as examples to students throughout the nation as to what one can achieve with an in-depth knowledge of the tenets of our government. These students are our future leaders and the next generation that will continue to defend democracy and uphold the Constitution. I know these students, and while I admire their knowledge and intelligence, I admire even more their passionate dedication to our American ideals.

The participating students from East Brunswick competed against more than 1,200 students from across the country. This program was created by The Center for Civic Education in 1987 and over 26 million students have participated in it. The goal of the program is to educate high school students on the impor-

ance of continued civic involvement. These exceptional students met here in Washington from April 30th to May 2nd to display their knowledge of the U.S. Constitution and its founding principles.

I would like to congratulate the students of East Brunswick High School, who are: Rajiv Agarwal, Elliot Chiu, Yan Cui, Aditi Eleswarapu, Michael Genson, Stephanie Horowitz, Frances Huang, Manisha Johary, Michael Kofstky, Kevin Kuo, Sam Lau, Alexandra Palmer, Resham Patel, Mark Pruce, Panwan Punjabi, Caroline Rana, Natalie Rana, Sana Sheikh, Allison Sorkin, Ilana Stern, Eric Struening, Lauren Volosin, and teacher Alan Brodman.

These names themselves suggest such a diversity of origins and heritage that it calls forth our national motto "E Pluribus Unum"—from many we are one. That these students devote themselves to learning about our system of self-government that is the key to our greatness is inspiring.

I am so proud of these young constitutional scholars and wish them luck in all their future endeavors. May these exceptional students continue to understand and uphold democracy.

INSTRUCTION TO CONFEREES ON
MEDICAID

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, during my absence for the birth of my granddaughter, Kate, the House considered a motion to instruct the conferees on the budget resolution, H. Con. Res. 95.

On rollcall vote No. 134, I would have been proud to join my colleagues from Georgia, led by Mr. DEAL of Georgia, in opposing the motion to instruct. One thing I have learned about Washington during my time here so far is that a "cut" is actually not a cut at all—it is merely a reduction in the rate of growth. When we have so many programs driven by formulas that continue to grow year after year, the way to deal with the problem is not by denying any problem exists, but by taking steps to deal with the underlying issues that created the problem.

The House Leadership has taken admirable steps to deal with the problems of continued growth in mandatory spending, and I am thrilled that we are moving forward with reductions in mandatory program spending. These are not cuts, but are commonsense steps to manage the people's resources wisely.

INTRODUCING THE RAILROAD
COMPETITION IMPROVEMENT
AND REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF
2005

HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 4, 2005

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, twenty-five years ago, Congress voted to deregulate the Nation's railroad industry and enacted the

Staggers Rail Act. The railroad industry at that time was in dire straits. Years of low profits, deferred maintenance, and ill-conceived regulatory policies had resulted in a very sick industry. We were assured that deregulation was the cure. We were told that economic regulation had outlived its usefulness; that it was preventing the industry from competing effectively with trucks, barges, and pipelines; and that there were still a sufficient number of rail carriers to provide significant rail-to-rail competition. We deregulated the industry.

At the outset, some good things did happen. America's railroads are much healthier today than they were in 1980. Industry rates of return that hovered in the 1–2 percent range in the 1970s were up in the 6–9 percent range in the 1990s. Today, U.S. railroads account for 42 percent of intercity freight ton-miles; more than any other mode of transportation. In fact, U.S. railroads move four times more freight than all of Western Europe's freight railroads combined.

North American railroads currently earn \$42 billion in annual revenues. The most recent financial reports are strong. For the first quarter of 2005, BNSF Railway's freight revenues increased \$451 million, or 18 percent, to a first quarter record of \$2.9 billion. Consumer products revenues increased \$203 million, or 22 percent. Agricultural products revenues were up \$86 million, or 20 percent, to \$524 million. Industrial products revenues increased \$84 million, or 15 percent, to \$647 million. And coal revenues rose \$78 million, or 15 percent, to \$598 million resulting from record haulage of 66 million tons for utility customers.

Union Pacific reported a first quarter 2005 record for commodity revenue: \$3 billion in 2005, up 8 percent from 2004. Energy revenues were up \$81 million, or 14 percent, to \$668 million. Agricultural revenues were up \$37 million, or 9 percent, to \$448 million. Industrial products revenues were up \$67 million, or 12 percent, to \$630 million. And chemical revenues were up \$31 million, or 8 percent, to \$441 million.

CSX's surface transportation revenue for the 2005 first quarter was \$2.1 billion versus \$1.9 billion in 2004. Metals revenues were up \$19 million, or 16 percent, to \$138 million. Forest products revenues were up \$84 million, or 11 percent, to \$176 million. Coal, coke, and iron ore revenues were up \$84 million, or 20 percent, to \$506 million. And automotive products revenues were up \$6 million, or 3 percent, to \$208 million.

Norfolk Southern's general merchandise revenues for the 2005 first quarter reached a record \$1.1 billion, an increase of 12 percent over the same period in 2004. Metals and construction revenues led the growth with a 22 percent increase, followed by paper, up 19 percent, and chemicals, up 14 percent. Coal revenues increased 17 percent to \$467 million in the first quarter compared with the same quarter last year.

With the exception of Union Pacific, all of the Class I railroads in the U.S. are making higher profits. BNSF's net earnings for the first quarter of 2005 were \$321 million, up \$128 million from the same period in 2004. CSX's net income was \$579 million, up \$30 million from 2004. Norfolk Southern's net income was \$194 million, up \$36 million from 2004. And although Union Pacific's profits were lower than 2004 figures, the railroad's net income was \$128 million in 2005.