

to locate a more suitable plan when a person's drug is not covered by the plan.

Protect beneficiaries from losing coverage of needed medicines during the year they are enrolled by not allowing plans to change what drugs they will pay for during that year.

Finally, for all those who actually paid more than they should have for their medications, this bill requires Medicare to reimburse them, as well as any others who have stepped in to pay the costs for seniors and those with disabilities when they were denied or overcharged for their medicines. Medicare should be cutting through the red tape, not the beneficiaries or their pharmacist.

Democrats have also introduced legislation that focuses on the major structural problems built into the program designed by the Republicans and their industry friends. But today we introduce this bill to alleviate some of the short-term and transition problems that have arisen with the current ill-conceived Medicare prescription drug benefit.

This Administration has failed in providing seniors and people with disabilities with a smooth transition to prescription drug coverage. Let us not fail them again by ignoring the immediate problems.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO CHIEF EARL A. GREENE JR. OF THE CLARK COUNTY NEVADA FIRE DEPARTMENT

**HON. JON C. PORTER**

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 1, 2006*

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Earl A. Greene, Jr., Chief, Clark County Nevada Fire Department. Chief Greene is retiring from the fire department after 33 years of dedicated service. He has been involved in all areas of fire services, including: Suppression, Prevention, Hazardous Materials, Logistics, Volunteer Fire, and Administration.

Chief Greene received a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science with an emphasis on pre-law from Southwestern State College in Weatherford, OK. He is married to the former Susan Enoch and has two grown children, Earl III and Camile.

Among the highlights of Chief Green's career are his involvement in the implementation of the retrofit of building and fire codes that were passed as a result of the MGM Grand and Las Vegas Hilton Hotel fires. Chief Greene was also instrumental in the establishment of the Police and Fire Executives of Southern Nevada, an organization that brings together all sheriffs and police and fire chiefs on a regular basis to discuss and deal with issues common to public safety agencies.

Under Chief Green's direction, the Clark County Fire Department became the first county-level department to achieve Insurance Services Office (ISO) Level 1 status, and in 2003, the department was awarded accredited agency status by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International. In August, 2003, Chief Greene was awarded the prestigious Chief Fire Officer Designation by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International, an honor bestowed upon only 319 individuals nationwide who have demonstrated personal and professional excellence within the fire service.

Mr. Speaker, Chief Greene is a dedicated officer who has worked diligently for Clark County, NV. I ask my fellow colleagues to stand with me today and honor all fire fighters across the country, like Chief Greene, who have dedicated many years in protecting the residents of their community and State.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF THE HONORABLE KATHLEEN AKAO

**HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 1, 2006*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise along with Congressman SAM FARR to pay tribute to the Honorable Kathleen Akao, her invaluable contributions to Santa Clara County and her longstanding dedication to upholding the integrity of our justice system.

Kathleen Akao was born in Long Beach on September 28, 1948 to Tokio and Lillian Katayama. She graduated from San Jose State University in 1971 with a Bachelors Degree in English and received her law degree from Santa Clara University in 1981.

In Santa Clara, Kathleen served as President of the Asian Law Students Association and later as Staff Attorney with San Jose's Asian Law Alliance, where she worked with many recent immigrants to the Bay Area. Kathleen was admitted to the California Bar in 1982 and immediately joined the State Bar's Subcommittee on Redress, working to seek recognition and restitution for Americans interned during World War II, an issue of particular resonance to Kathleen, whose mother had been interned during the war. Kathleen's personal experiences and dedication to understanding issues in-depth gave perspective to her work as a community activist, a lawyer and a judge.

Kathleen held a private law practice, and later, served as Deputy Public Defender for Santa Clara County. From 1986–1994, she worked for Santa Cruz County as Assistant County Counsel. In 1991, Kathleen's husband, James Akao, passed away at the young age of 46—a great loss for both Kathleen and their son, Kristoffer.

In 1994, Kathleen Akao became the first Asian American attorney in California to successfully challenge and unseat an incumbent Superior Court judge. Her victory highlighted her commitment to the public justice system and represented a landmark accomplishment in the Asian American community.

However, Kathleen's greatest achievement was the indelible mark she left on the community for her outstanding work with juveniles and families. She took a keen and genuine interest in providing the best options for juveniles and families who found themselves in her courtroom. In 1999, Kathleen established a county Drug Court, which coupled penalties with treatment programs, proving her commitment to the rehabilitation process. She believed in fair decisions for all and devoted her time to Teen Peer Court, a system under which juveniles may have their sanctions decided by their peers.

Kathleen died on November 27th, 2005—her untimely passing was due to heart failure following a biopsy procedure. She will always be known for her integrity and fairness both in

and outside of her courtroom. She was compassionate and generous, and had an uplifting sense of humor. Colleagues said she treated everyone with dignity and respect, approached problems pragmatically, and always sought to improve and expand the ways in which she served the public. Through her innovative and selfless work with her community and her tireless efforts to rule her courtroom fairly, Kathleen shaped and improved the lives of those around her.

Judge Akao is survived by her son, Kristoffer, her father, Tokio Katayama, her three brothers, Danny, Robert, and David, and a legacy of service, integrity and compassion for our community to share and uphold. We will all miss her.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION PROTECTING THE CIVIL LIBERTIES OF HOUSE GALLERY VISITORS

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 1, 2006*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, last night, at President Bush's State of the Union address, two visitors were forced from the House Chamber. Cindy Sheehan and Rep. Bill Young's wife, Beverly. Cindy Sheehan was arrested for unlawful conduct, Mrs. Young was not.

What did they do wrong?

They were each wearing T-shirts that the Capitol Police determined were "protests". Ms. Sheehan's shirt read: "2245 Dead. How many more?" Mrs. Young's shirt read: "Support the Troops—Fighting for Freedom."

Nothing in the House Rules prohibits the wearing of T-shirts or has limitations on what those shirts can have written on them.

Both individuals insist they were not protesting, but simply wearing shirts that delivered important messages for them.

What happened to them can only be described as Gestapo behavior. Each woman was forced to leave the House Gallery and Ms. Sheehan was then arrested and charged with unlawful conduct.

It is my understanding that because President Bush was in the Chamber, control of the Chamber was ceded to him—or the Secret Service to be exact.

Therefore, none of us should be surprised by what happened. Whenever and wherever President Bush speaks, he has the Secret Service sanitize and sterilize the audience. There are countless reports of people with T-shirts stating views that differ from the President being removed from his supposedly public appearances.

What happened last night to Ms. Sheehan and Mrs. Young was un-American and undemocratic. That's why I am introducing a resolution calling on the Office of the Sergeant at Arms to report to Congress within 30 days making clear under what authority these two individuals were prosecuted and making recommendations to Congress so we can assure that nothing like this ever happens again. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this important resolution.

How can we allow the President to proclaim he is fighting for freedom abroad when he continually tramples our freedoms here at home?