

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?

This is supposed to be the people's house. Therefore, the President should not be able to override our governance and make us part of his Gestapo regime.

MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, the story of our Nation's healthcare system is one of great success but also one of great failure and missed opportunity. We have some of the finest medical institutions in the world: the best trained medical professionals, cutting-edge technology, and state-of-the-art facilities.

We also have, however, major gaps in our healthcare system. At last count nearly 46 million Americans were uninsured. Close to six million Americans lost their insurance between 2000 and 2004. More than 18,000 Americans die prematurely each year because they lack health insurance coverage. Despite the outstanding job by hospitals, community health centers, and others, our safety net is becoming threadbare. Federal spending on the healthcare safety net declined 8.9 percent between 2001 and 2004, while the need continues to grow even larger.

The time is ripe for action. Today several of my Democratic colleagues and I are introducing a bill to bring the tried, true, and trusted Medicare program to all. This bill will for the first time make Medicare available to those under age 65. Americans will also have the option of selecting any of the plans offered to members of Congress, the President, and Federal employees.

According to the Institute of Medicine, covering all Americans will actually save the country \$380 billion a year. That is partly because we are already paying for the health care of the uninsured through emergency room services. By providing people the ability to obtain comprehensive healthcare coverage, they will be able to receive better prevention services and earlier treatments, lowering the cost of their care. All Americans will reap the economic benefits of a healthier Nation.

And this plan will save not only lives, but also American industries and jobs. We currently have an unlevel economic playing field. American companies are competing in the international marketplace against companies that do not directly bear the costs of providing their employees and retirees health care. American companies are doing the right thing, but being penalized for it.

I am pleased to introduce this "Medicare for All" bill today as a companion bill to the legislation Senator KENNEDY introduced yesterday. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I urge the Republican leadership to let us address the healthcare crisis faced by millions of Americans.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ELLEN KNOWLTON; SPECIAL AGENT IN CHARGE OF THE FBI LAS VEGAS OFFICE

HON. JON C. PORTER

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of Ellen Knowlton, who retires from the Federal Bureau of Investigations on February 3, 2006, after 24 years of dedicated service.

Special Agent in Charge Ellen Knowlton, is a graduate of California State University, Sacramento, where she received a bachelors of science in business administration. She also obtained a master's degree in business administration from Saint Mary's College, Moraga, California. Prior to joining the Federal Bureau of Investigation, she worked in the Insurance Industry as a Claims Supervisor.

Agent Knowlton has served in many offices and many positions throughout her years as an FBI agent. She has traveled the world on assignment and lived in many cities and countries as demanded by her job. Mrs. Knowlton's first assignment was to the FBI's Sacramento Field Office, where she was responsible for investigating bank robbery, fugitive, and kidnapping matters. She was later transferred to the Oklahoma City Field Office, where she was responsible for investigating white-collar crime matters.

When assigned to the San Francisco Field Office, she was responsible for investigating foreign counterintelligence and white-collar crime matters. In the New Orleans Field Office, she supervised the White-Collar Crime Squad. Later, she became Unit Chief in the Criminal Investigative Division at FBIHQ. Other managerial positions Mrs. Knowlton held were Assistant Special Agent in Charge, FCI ASAC, and Criminal Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Field Office, Inspector, and Deputy Assistant Director of the National Security Division, Counterintelligence Operations Support.

In May of 2002 Agent Ellen Knowlton moved with her family to Las Vegas in order to begin her job as Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Las Vegas office. During her tenure, Agent Knowlton has earned the respect of her colleagues and community leaders.

Mr. Speaker, we have been fortunate to have Ellen Knowlton in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the state has benefited from her knowledge and skill as an FBI agent. It is with great pleasure that I recognize Agent Knowlton today, and I ask my colleagues to join with me in honoring all FBI agents, like Agent Ellen Knowlton, who have dedicated years of their lives to protecting the residents of our communities.

TRIBUTE TO FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SUCCASUNNA

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the First Presbyterian Church

of Succasunna in the Township of Roxbury, Morris County, New Jersey, a vibrant community I am proud to represent. On April 29, 2006, the good citizens of Succasunna will celebrate the First Presbyterian Church's 250th anniversary.

The congregation first organized in 1756. In 1760, their first building was erected and measured approximately 36 by 40 feet in size, had plain seats, an unfinished floor and no ceiling. In fact, it wasn't until 1768 that the congregation was strong enough to extend a call for a full-time pastor, Reverend William Woodhull, whom they shared with a congregation in Chester, New Jersey for a salary of £400. The church building was used during the Revolutionary War for barracks, for a hospital, and to keep material dry. It is rumored that George Washington visited hospitalized troops there. When the new Centennial Bell for Independence Hall in Philadelphia was being cast, the church contributed one of the cannons being stored there for bell metal.

On May 3, 1817, the church incorporated a Board of Trustees as "The Trustees of the First Presbyterian Church of Suckasunny Plains."

In 1853, the congregation tore down the original building and raised a new one in the fall of the same year. Amongst other relics, they placed a brief history of the church, a list of the officers and members at that time, certain newspapers, and a bullet found in removing the old building bearing the date in etching July 4, 1776 within the cornerstone of the new church. The first service in this new building was the funeral for Mahlon Dickerson, a distinguished native son, who had been judge, general, Governor of New Jersey, Member of Congress, and Secretary of the Navy in the cabinet of President Jackson. He was responsible for bringing President Martin Van Buren to worship there.

The building, now known as the Chapel, was erected in the memory of Eliza Platt Stoddard, a step-daughter to then Reverend Dr. Elijah W. Stoddard. In 1957, a committee planned fundraising for a new pipe organ and a major expansion project for what is now known as Fellowship Hall.

Mr. Speaker, I urge you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating the First Presbyterian Church of Succasunna on the celebration of its 250 years serving Morris County.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JO ANN DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 1, 2006

Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I was granted a leave of absence for December 19, 2005. Had I been present, I would have voted the following:

Rollcall 665, H.R. 2520, the Stem Cell Therapeutic and Research Act—"yea."

Rollcall 666, waiving points of order against the conference report on H.R. 2863, Department of Defense Appropriations for FY06—"yea."

Rollcall 667, H. Con. Res. 284, expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Israel—"yea."

Rollcall 668, motion to recommit Conference Report to H.R. 2863, Defense Appropriations for FY06—"nay."