

those who are deceased. Unless we take action, family members will continue to suffer from the misuse of their loved one's personal information.

My legislation, the Identity Theft Protection for the Deceased Act, requires that the federal government inform each national credit bureau when an individual passes away. In turn, the credit bureaus will flag the histories of those who have deceased and potential creditors will know not to issue lines of credit or new loans to those attempting to misuse their personal information.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that we act to stop this vicious form of identity theft and protect the relatives of America's deceased.

TRIBUTE TO MARY WILLIAMS

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2006

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a dedicated employee of the State of South Carolina with whom I have had the extraordinary pleasure of working with as she prepares to retire from public service. Mary Lee Williams has served for more than twenty-five years on the staff of the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission (SHAC).

In 1983, during my tenure as South Carolina Human Affairs Commissioner, I selected Mary as the agency's employee of the year. My comments at the time were "being a receptionist in any office is difficult, but when that difficulty is compounded by having to serve as a first point of contact to people who feel that they have been unfairly treated in the workplace, the job becomes nearly impossible." I commented in my recognition that Mary "has over the years demonstrated that she has the capacity to do the nearly impossible." I know the same is true today.

Mary Williams is a native of Richland County and is a product of its public schools. She joined us at SHAC in 1980, where she continues to serve ably as an Information Specialist. Her demeanor is friendly and helpful, and she always treated those seeking the Commission's help with dignity and respect.

Mary draws her strength of character and her strong work ethic from her faith. She has been a member of Bethlehem Baptist Church for fifty-three years. There she lends her talents to singing in the Musical Choir, serving in the Women's Ministry, and teaching Sunday School classes.

She has a beautiful voice and has been a member of Columbia, South Carolina's Capital City Chorale for a number of years. The Chorale has performing on NBC's Today Show and I have had the pleasure of sponsoring them in Washington, DC on two occasions. She also shared her talents as a soloist during a Black History Month program I keynoted at the Dorn Veterans Hospital in Columbia, and has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation from the Veterans Administration for her service.

Mary has also found time to serve her community as a volunteer. She has donated her services to the Meals-On-Wheels program for 17 years. For five years, she served on SHAC's United Way Annual Campaign team. She has been an active member of both the

National Association of Human Rights Workers and the South Carolina State Employees Association.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mary Ann Williams on her retirement from the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission. She is a wonderful example of a dedicated public servant who has made a true difference in the lives of others. On a personal note, I thank Mary for her friendship and support over the years. I wish her the best and Godspeed in her future endeavors.

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT ACT OF 2006

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2006

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I introduce the District of Columbia Medicaid Reimbursement Act of 2006 today to raise the federal medical assistance percentage (FMAP), the federal contribution from the federal government, to 75 percent from 70 percent and to reduce the District's unique role as the only city that pays the full local cost of Medicaid, a program that is carried by states and counties in our country. New York City, the jurisdiction that powers the economy of New York State, contributes a 25 percent local share to Medicaid while the state pays 25 percent, less than the District's statutorily mandated 30 percent contribution. I introduce this bill because the District's continuing responsibility for most Medicaid costs that are typically borne by entire states is a major component of the District's structural deficit and threatens the stability of the city itself.

The District's Chief Financial Officer reports that rapidly increasing Medicaid costs put the city at risk. In FY 2005, these costs accounted for \$1.4 billion or 22 percent of the city's gross funds budget. Total program costs have risen 42 percent since 1999, and are projected to increase by another \$39 million this year. Yet the District, unlike other large cities which have lost significant populations, has no state and no state economy to share this burden. More than 25 percent of District children and adults are enrolled in Medicaid compared to 12 percent in Maryland and just 9 percent in Virginia. On average, the District spends over \$7,000 per enrollee, while Maryland and Virginia spend \$5,509 and \$5,177, respectively, reflecting serious health conditions that are concentrated among big city residents.

The D.C. Medicaid Reimbursement Act of 2006 is the seventh in the "Free and Equal D.C." series. This series of bills addresses inappropriate and often unequal restrictions placed only on the District and no other U.S. jurisdiction. Although today's bill cannot address the entire structural problem that the District faces because the city is not part of a state, the bill would eliminate the greater percentage the District pays than any city by allowing a 25 percent city contribution, rather than a contribution even greater than New York City.

In 1997, as part of the Balanced Budget Act, Congress recognized that state costs were too costly for anyone city to shoulder. To

alleviate the resulting financial crisis, Congress increased the federal Medicaid contribution to the District from 50 to 70 percent, and took responsibility for a few state costs—prisons and courts—relieving the immediate burden, but the city continues to carry most state costs.

In 1997, a formulaic error in the Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) allotment reduced even the 70 percent FMAP share, and as a result, the District received only \$23 million instead of the \$49 million due. I was able to secure a technical correction to the Balanced Budget Act of 1999, partially increasing the annual allotment to \$32 million from FY 2000 forward. I appreciate that last year, Congress responded to my effort to get an additional annual increase of \$20 million in the budget reconciliation bill, bringing D.C.'s Medicaid reimbursement payments to \$57 million as intended by the Balanced Budget Act. This amount did not reimburse the District for the years a federal error denied the city part of its federal contribution, and in any case, of course, was not intended to meet the structural problem this bill partially addresses.

The District has taken important steps on its own to reduce Medicaid costs through greater efficiency, and to treat and prevent conditions that prove costly when hospitalization or expensive treatments become necessary. The District Medicaid agency won federal recognition as one of only two Medicaid programs nationwide to exceed the federal government's child immunization goal for school-age children at 95 percent, and improved its fraud surveillance, recovering \$15 million in fraudulently billed funds. The city's novel D.C. Health Care Alliance, for which federal approval is pending, would allow coverage of residents and provide more early and preventative care, avoiding huge Medicaid costs when health conditions become severe and Medicaid becomes the only option.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this increase that will help my city's most needy residents.

IN APPRECIATION OF MS. CATHY SAYRE

HON. C.A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 25, 2006

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I proudly rise before you today in appreciation of an educator who has devoted 39 years of her life to bettering the lives of our children. Ms. Cathy Sayre is truly worthy of recognition for her dedication to Solley Elementary in Anne Arundel County.

Ms. Sayre is a graduate of Western Maryland College. Shortly after earning her degree she informed her parents she did not want to be a lab technician as planned, rather she would pursue a career in education; we are certainly glad she did. Ms. Sayre has been an instrumental part of the developmental process of many children.

As an elementary teacher, Ms. Sayre taught first, second, third, and fourth grades as well as a combination of second and third grades. She has educated over 1,200 students in her career. She is admired by peers and adored by her students.

Teachers are often the unsung heroes of the education field. They play a critical role in