

The COPE Act not only encourages innovation and the wider deployment of broadband networks, it will help drive down the price that consumers pay for broadband services. It requires that service providers pay 5 percent of local revenues to local governments—more than many cities currently receive—and that providers pay an additional 1 percent to support public, governmental, and educational programming. It also contains provisions to ensure that service providers do not discriminate against low-income consumers. These are important improvements over existing law.

The COPE Act is far from perfect. It inappropriately allows the Federal Communications Commission to resolve local “rights-of-way” disputes. These are concerns best handled by local governments. When a broken water main interrupts local TV service, it doesn’t make much sense for customers to call an 800 number at the FCC. Still, two amendments added to the bill go a long way toward restoring local control. The first institutes a 90-day period during which local authorities and service providers must meet to resolve right-of-way and fee disputes. Only after the 90-day period can either party bring the dispute to the FCC. This amendment empowers local authorities by forcing providers to work with local officials to resolve most right-of-way and fee disputes. The second gives cities the authority to resolve consumer complaints about cable service, including complaints that a cable provider has failed to provide consumers with fair and open access to the Internet. This amendment would give local officials the legal authority to protect consumers and prevent unfair and discriminatory business practices, which could lead to fines for providers up to \$750,000 a day.

Equally troubling is the lack of strong “net neutrality” language, which would ensure that everyday web surfers have access to the same Internet used by big media companies. Both sides of this dispute want a vibrant Internet that allows fast and fair access to all users. The question is how to get there. Opponents of “net neutrality” believe that market forces alone will do the job. I am not so sanguine. I voted for an amendment that would have prohibited service providers from selectively blocking or slowing access to certain Internet content, or from charging certain users extra to send information over the Internet. Though it is not absolutely clear this language is needed now, my vote sends the message that the Internet must remain fair and open to all. I believe we will have more opportunities to address this issue during the conference on the COPE Act.

I will work to ensure that the telecommunications legislation Congress sends to the President strikes the right balance and is reflective of the needs of consumers and our communities. This bill makes important progress, but we can make it even better.

HONORING COLONEL RUSSELL D.
GOLD

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay public tribute to Colonel Russell

D. Gold, an exemplary soldier and citizen from my congressional district. Colonel Gold recently announced his retirement as Chief of Staff at the U.S. Army Armor Center, Fort Knox, Kentucky.

A native of West Palm Beach, Florida, Colonel Gold was first commissioned through ROTC as a Distinguished Military Student from The Citadel, beginning his military career as a Tank Platoon Leader, then Executive Officer with the 82d Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. After completion of the Armor Officer Advance Course, he commanded Company B, 2d Battalion, 72d Armor, 2d Infantry Division, at Camp Casey, Korea. Upon completion of command, he served as a Small Group Instructor in the Armor Officer Advance Course, then, Executive Officer of the U.S. Army Armor School at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

From 1993 through 1995, Colonel Gold was assigned to the First Armored Division in Germany, where he served as the Battalion S-3 and Battalion Executive Officer with the 2d Battalion, 67th Armor, then as the Brigade S-3 for the First Brigade, 1st Armor Division. From 1995–1997, Colonel Gold was assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, DC, where he served in the J-8 as Chief, War-Game Exercise Branch. Colonel Gold then commanded the 1st Battalion, 67th Armor, 4th Infantry Division, at Fort Hood, Texas. Following battalion command, Colonel Gold served as the III Corps Secretary of the General Staff, then after graduating from the Army War College, became the Director of Combat Developments at Fort Knox.

Colonel Gold commanded the 3d Brigade Combat Team (Iraq), 1st Armored Division, of Fort Riley, Kansas, from June 2002 to June 2004 before being assigned as Chief of Staff of the Armor Center on July 30, 2004.

Colonel Gold’s awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit award, Bronze Star Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Valorous Unit Award, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, National Defense Service Medal, Combat Action Badge, Master Parachutist Badge, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge. Colonel Gold will also be awarded the Distinguished Service Medal during his retirement ceremony.

It is my great privilege to recognize Colonel Gold today, before the entire U.S. House of Representatives, for his lifelong example of leadership and service. His unique achievements and dedication to the men and women of the U.S. Army make him an outstanding American worthy of our collective honor and respect.

TRIBUTE TO WANDA GARNER
CASH

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great friend and a great journalist. After more than thirty years working

in journalism, Wanda Garner Cash, will be leaving her post as Publisher and Editor of the Baytown Sun this June as she becomes a senior lecturer and fellow at the University of Texas School of Journalism. She will be serving as the first fellow to the S. Griffin Singer Professorship, a fellowship created to honor a former University of Texas professor.

Since receiving her bachelor’s degree in journalism in 1971 from the University of Texas, she has served in a variety of capacities for a variety of organizations. Mrs. Cash worked as the assistant managing editor of The Galveston County Daily News, editor of the Kerrville Daily News, executive editor of the Brazosport Facts, and most recently as publisher and editor of the Baytown Sun.

Her success in the realm of journalism spans further than prestigious job titles. In addition to being an accomplished print journalist, Mrs. Cash has served as a member of the Legislative Advisory Committee where she has been a staunch advocate of open government and has testified before the Texas Legislature on numerous occasions. She has also been a mentor for young journalists and is recognized for always taking time to help young journalists develop their own talents. This quality will serve her students well as she enters the college arena this June.

The city of Baytown will miss Mrs. Cash and her dedication to the Baytown community. She has served as the vice-chair and chair of the Baytown West Chambers County Economic Development Foundation, chaired a variety of fundraising events such as the annual Baytown Area United Way fund-raising campaign.

Her dedication to the community and her commitment to journalistic integrity will be missed in the city of Baytown, but I wish her well as she begins her tenure at the University of Texas. A loss for the City of Baytown is a gain for the students, the University of Texas and the journalism profession.

IN SUPPORT OF A CONFLICT RESPONSE FUND AND A COMPREHENSIVE USG APPROACH TO ADDRESSING THE THREAT OF FAILED STATES

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 9, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the most significant threat to our national security in the 21st Century is from failed countries. Nearly 2 billion people live in countries that are in danger of collapse. According to the 2002 U.S. National Security Strategy, the United States is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.

Stop and think about our recent defense and foreign policy obligations—Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo—and our current engagement in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Sudan. These are all failed states and their instability imperils U.S. national security.

The U.S. defense and foreign policy apparatus formally acknowledged the threat of failed states when the National Security Council directed the State Department to establish a Coordinator for Stabilization and Reconstruction to incorporate “lessons learned” from previous stabilization operations so that future