

jazz. In the early 1960's, Dr. Taylor became the first black artist to host a daily radio show, "The Billy Taylor Show," on WNEW, a major New York station. Dr. Taylor also brought jazz back to Harlem and the surrounding communities through the revolutionary Jazzmobile project, which he co-founded with Daphne Arnstein, a fellow member of the Harlem Cultural Council. The Jazzmobile began with a float borrowed from the Budweiser Beer Company that was converted into a bandstand-on-wheels. The organization produced summer outdoor concerts, lectures and special programs for disadvantaged inner-city youth. Renowned artists such as Dizzy Gillespie, Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, Buddy Rich, and Milt Jackson all contributed to the Jazzmobile by performing free outdoor concerts for the public. In particular, Dr. Taylor recalled the excitement of the audience when Duke Ellington performed, saying, "I don't know who was more excited, the audience, or Duke. He loved playing for the people of Harlem, and they loved him, madly." The program continues today throughout the United States.

Billy Taylor's recording career is nothing short of extraordinary. With more than two dozen albums recorded over a span of six decades, Dr. Taylor is renowned within the recording community through such compositions as, "I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to be Free" and "Peaceful Warrior," a work inspired by and dedicated to the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. In 1990, Dr. Taylor was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President George H.W. Bush and also has received two Peabody Awards, an Emmy, and a Grammy.

Dr. Taylor continues to be the country's spokesman for jazz. From 1977 until 1982, Dr. Taylor hosted "Jazz Alive," National Public Radio's most listened-to jazz program of its time.

In March 1993, he was appointed Jazz Adviser to the Kennedy Center, where he was responsible for dramatically expanding and enhancing its jazz program—and although he has officially retired, Dr. Taylor is busier than ever, continuing to provide his expertise to the institution. As with Jazzmobile, Billy Taylor continues to create outreach activities and public performances to expose people of all ages to the genre of Jazz at the Kennedy Center. At the University of Massachusetts, where he is the Wilmer D. Barrett Professor of Music, Dr. Taylor leads the annual Jazz in July program.

As we prepare for the 2nd Annual Duke Ellington Festival to be held in October, it is my pleasure to recognize Dr. Billy Taylor for his lifetime achievements and contributions to the genre of jazz and to the world at large. He is not only an extraordinary artist, but also a renowned and celebrated professional who has dedicated his life to bringing music to the masses. Dr. Billy Taylor inspires the next generation of musicians to continue in his footsteps and not only excel in their musical performances, but also to motivate and educate.

THE MILITARY PERSONNEL FINANCIAL SERVICES PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MAXINE WATERS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Military Personnel Financial Services Protection Act, S. 418, as passed by the Senate. The bill amends the Investment Company Act of 1940 to make it unlawful for any registered investment company to issue or sell any periodic payment plan certificate. In short, the bill will protect the members of our Armed Forces from unscrupulous practices regarding the sale of insurance as well as other financial and investment products.

Many of us have known for some time that members of our Armed Services have been preyed upon by unscrupulous individuals in the financial services arena. Members of the Armed Services are often the victims of aggressive and misleading sales practices and schemes that result in exorbitant commissions and fees for insurance products, etc. Some sales commissions are in excess of 50 percent on the first year of contributions to the insurance product. In addition, certain life insurance products are being marketed as investment products, providing minimal death benefits in exchange for excessive up-front premiums.

I believe that this bill takes a major step to close the existing loophole in the law allowing for the proliferation in the sale of these products. Mr. Speaker, it would be disgraceful if, after the sacrifices made by the men and women in our armed services, this body allowed these practices to continue. Today we should send a strong message to the people in the industry who would put profit above the well-being of our troops by passing S. 418.

The sooner we can pass this legislation and other measures to protect our service men and women from these predators the better off we will be. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS H. ALLEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 20, 2006

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5450 and applaud Representative EHLERS, Chairman BOEHLERT and the members of the House Science committee for their work on this bill. However, I am also deeply concerned with H.R. 5450. My concern, however, is not what is actually in this bill, but what is missing. Because the House Resources Committee refused to consider this important legislation, we are now debating a bill that does not include authorization for the oceanic component of NOAA.

This greatly disappoints me. As a co-chair of the bipartisan House Oceans Caucus, I have worked closely with the line offices of NOAA that handle ocean stewardship, and I

have always been amazed at the size and importance of their mission considering what little Congress gives them in the way of guidance or funds. Funding that should go to NOAA to bolster ocean research and management already pales in comparison to other natural resource programs, and now, we are about to authorize only the atmospheric component of NOAA. This is just another example of the failure of this Congress to make the management of our oceans a priority. This amazes me, considering the size and economic value of our oceans.

We have been called to make our oceans a greater priority for more than 6 years now. When are we going to act? After our fish stocks are fully depleted? After global warming have caused rising sea levels to erode our beaches and the oceans to become so acidic that coral reefs have wasted away? In 2000, with the passage of the Oceans Act, Congress called for a National Commission on Ocean Policy to conduct a nationwide fact-finding mission on the state of our oceans. The goal was to develop policy recommendations that would lead to a coordinated and comprehensive national ocean policy. The independent Pew Oceans Commission underwent a similar process to identify the root problems threatening our nations' oceans. The products of these two commissions are nothing short of remarkable. Both commissions independently came to the same clear message: our oceans are in peril.

It is NOAA that must tackle these challenges. As the lead agency on ocean management, both commissions acknowledged the size of the task that NOAA faces. Americans are facing declining fish stocks, beach closures due to poor water quality, and laws that are inadequate to protect America's oceans. Both commissions have called on Congress repeatedly to provide NOAA with an organic act. In fact, both have listed an organic act as one of the highest priorities in taking steps towards better management of our oceans.

NOAA already administers the core programs that manage our ocean resources, and again, does so under an ever tightening budget. For example, National Marine Fisheries Service manages all Federal fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management administers the Coastal Zone Management Act that protects our coasts from pollution and erosion. Congress sure likes to give NOAA a lot to do, but nothing to do it with.

Furthermore, NOAA also administers a number of completely unauthorized programs that Americans depend on. The Ocean and Atmospheric Research office played a lead role in helping institute an integrated ocean observation system based on what we already have in the Gulf of Maine. Analogous to the routine monitoring of weather and climate, ocean observation collects a myriad of temperature and current data that enhances the prediction of hurricanes and storms, the impacts of global warming, and is used by search and rescue teams and shipping fleets for navigation. Despite the multiple uses of ocean observation, the regional associations are now at risk of shutting down because as an unauthorized program, they are unable to find a sustainable funding path. It is ridiculous. In essence, this innovative program may have to shut down for being too ahead of its time.

The challenges NOAA faces are only going to increase over the next century. More than

50 percent of the population already lives in coastal counties, and the numbers are rising. To support NOAA in their task, Congress must provide it with a full organic act. With an organic act, the offices that run the core programs that Americans nation-wide depend on would be provided with an established mission. A clear mission would help NOAA prioritize and justify itself during appropriations, perhaps heading off the crippling cuts that are leveled against it each year. Guidance from Congress would also help NOAA reorganize and enhance inter-office and inter-agency communication, thus making NOAA operations more efficient and streamlined.

While I support H.R. 5450 for taking us toward the goal of authorizing NOAA, we must remember it only takes us halfway. By authorizing only the atmospheric and educational components of NOAA, we fail half of this vital agency, and I urge Congress to make a full organic act for NOAA a priority.

INTERNATIONAL DISASTER RISK
REDUCTION ACT

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, from hurricanes and floods in Latin America to earthquakes in Asia, natural disasters are increasingly becoming a regular feature of life for large numbers of people around the globe. By 2050, two billion people are expected to be especially vulnerable to floods due to growing populations, indiscriminate logging on hillsides, rapid urbanization, and increasing development along coasts and in other hazardous regions.

Thankfully, as I have seen on trips to disaster-affected area, the devastating impacts of natural disasters can be mitigated by building in safer locations, constructing sturdier dwellings, enforcing sound building practices, and protecting natural ecosystems. For example, communities in Indonesia that had intact mangrove stands along their coastlines were protected from the full force of the December 2004 tsunami and faced less damage and fewer lives lost. In many Indonesian towns, the only buildings left standing were the mosques, having been built to a higher standard.

In 2004, the United States spent \$529 million responding to disasters in foreign countries, making us the largest donor for disaster relief, recovery, and rehabilitation. However, according to a study by the World Bank and the United States Geological Survey, during the 1990s, \$40 billion invested globally in preventive measures could have saved \$280 billion in disaster relief funds and saved countless lives.

To address these issues, Mr. BURTON and I are introducing the International Disaster Risk Reduction Act. This bill promotes the use of disaster mitigation efforts in foreign countries, authorizes assistance to help in those efforts, and requires that U.S. disaster relief efforts help make communities less vulnerable to future disasters.

IN HONOR OF PLANTRONICS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Plantronics of Santa Cruz, California on being recognized as one of the "Top 25 medium companies places to work for in America" by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). This honor is bestowed only upon the most deserving companies in the country who meet high standards of employment.

Plantronics is a hardware company from Santa Cruz that specializes in lightweight headsets and is the market leader worldwide. The company was founded in 1961, and was the first to introduce the lightweight communication headset in 1962, and in 1969 a Plantronics headset carried Neil Armstrong's first words from the moon. Plantronics have remained on the cutting edge of headset technology ever since it's founding and continue to raise the bar in the field.

Each of the companies recognized by SHRM is dedicated to communicating clearly with their employees and encouraging their workers to voice their opinions. In addition, these companies provide generous salaries and benefit packages. In return, their employees are motivated and invested in the organization, making these companies some of the most successful medium-sized businesses in their industries.

Plantronics is known to have flexible hours for its employees, allowing them to take time to participate in exciting activities that Santa Cruz has to offer such as surfing, cycling, and hiking. They have a subsidized on-site cafeteria which serves locally grown, organic fruits and vegetables. Importantly, Plantronics is active in the community, and contributes to local service organizations.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to acknowledge Plantronics for their recognition as one of the best places to work in the country and I wish them continued success.

CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF
UNION REPRESENTATIVE GERI
OCHOCINSKA

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to recognize the career of Union Organizer and Negotiator Geri Ochocinska, who is retiring after a distinguished career as Director of UAW Region 9.

Ms. Ochocinska has been a leader of Buffalo's Labor movement since 1965 when she helped organize Rich Ice Cream Co. Following this success, she joined UAW Local 55 as a Technical, Office and Professional unit Chair. She was then promoted up the ranks of Local 55, serving at various times as Office Manager, Administrative Assistant to retirement and welfare funds, Business Representative, Vice President and Financial Secretary.

In 1976, Ms. Ochocinska was appointed International Representative, servicing 60

companies in the Western New York area for her local UAW. She held this post until her election as UAW Regional Director.

Elected in 1998, Ms. Ochocinska became the first woman to hold the post of Regional Director of the UAW. As Regional Director of UAW Region 9, Ms. Ochocinska represented the 91,898 active and retired members of the UAW from Western and Central New York, New Jersey, and most of Pennsylvania. She was re-elected to her post in 2002.

A recent article printed in Western New York's Business Newspaper, Business First, pointed out that Geri Ochocinska has risen higher than any woman in the history of organized labor in Western New York. Geri receives recognition as a great negotiator. She is a woman who takes firm stands in negotiations. She also is known for her compassion and for the nurturing ways she cared for and fought for UAW workers.

Ms. Ochocinska's retirement is a loss to the Labor Community of Western New York, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank her and congratulate her for a lifetime of service to the working men and women of Western New York.

HONORING THE HONORABLE
MARY DENNY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Representative Mary Denny for her service in the Texas House of Representatives.

Representative Denny has played an intricate part in the development of the Republican Party in Denton and the North Texas region over the past 20 years. She has helped in over 300 State, Local and National elections in her career and has represented Denton County in both State and National Republican conventions.

As a local businesswoman and former teacher, she graduated from the University of North Texas with a bachelor's degree in Education. She is presently serving her 6th term as State Representative for the 63rd district in Texas. Currently Mrs. Denny is assigned to several House Committees including; Chairman of Elections, House Criminal Jurisprudence, House Administration committee, and the Select Committee on Ethics.

Throughout her amazing career Mrs. Denny has received several awards recognizing her achievements as both a businesswoman and a legislator. She has been recognized for the past four consecutive terms as a Leader of Excellence by the Free Enterprise Committee, a special honor given to the top ten percent of conservative legislators. She has also been recognized as a Friend to the Taxpayer and honored as an Outstanding Legislator by the American Family Association of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, it has been my distinguished honor to work alongside Mrs. Mary Denny for the improvement and development of Denton, Texas. Her leadership and commitment to the citizens of Denton County is remarkable and it has been a privilege to know such a dedicated individual.