

Representative DINGELL presided over the House chamber when the House passed the Social Security Act of 1965, creating Medicare. Years later, the one-time forest ranger, and avid outdoorsman, helped usher through Congress the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Clean Air Act of 1990.

Throughout his distinguished career, he has led the fight to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable health care, fought to close corporate loopholes, investigated government waste of taxpayer dollars, and advocated for the safety of consumers. Most recently, Representative DINGELL played a key roll in the passage of the Consumer Products Safety and Improvement Act, which was signed into law last August.

In my few years in the House, I have been honored to have served beside JOHN DINGELL. I have learned a great deal from such a thoughtful, serious legislator, and I look forward to working with him as Congress continues to address the country's economic, health care, and climate challenges.

I join my colleagues in honoring an institution in the House of Representatives, JOHN DINGELL, for his service to his constituents, the Congress, and the country.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING THE
200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SONORA
UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 2009

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, the Sonora United Methodist Church was founded in 1808 and convened for its first 15 years without a proper church building eventually worshipping in a log structure only as recently as 1823, and

Whereas, the congregation celebrated its 200th anniversary with special services, a potluck dinner, and a performance by the Greater Zanesville Singers on September 21, and

Whereas, the Sonora United Methodist Church operated continuously for 200 years as part of a charge, or cluster of parishes serviced by one pastor, making it part of a larger worshipping community that prided itself in good works and devotion to the Gospel; now, therefore, be it

Resolved that along with the residents of the 18th Congressional District, I commend the Sonora United Methodist Church for 200 years of service and dedication to southeastern Ohio, the community of churches encompassing the charge and, an adherence to the teachings of Jesus Christ. The congregants, past and present, of Sonora United Methodist Church have exemplified the quality of Christian service to the community and deserve the recognition that comes with such dedication.

NATIONAL SILVER ALERT ACT OF
2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 10, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I would also like to thank Representative LLOYD DOGGETT for his leadership in bringing this important legislation to the floor. I urge my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

As a Senior Member of the House Judiciary Committee, I understand the importance of protecting one of America's treasures: the elderly. I fully support the goals of this legislation in helping to keep America's elderly safe from harm.

Last year during the second session of the 110th Congress, Representative DOGGETT introduced, H.R. 6064, the "National Silver Alert Act." I fought hard to amend H.R. 6064 to include language that would strengthen the National Silver Alert Act. My language was incorporated into that bill and it was successfully reported out of the Judiciary Committee.

This term, Representative DOGGETT has included the language from H.R. 423, the "Kristen's Act Reauthorization" into the present National Silver Alert bill. Thus, strengthening the protections in the bill.

Thousands of vulnerable older adults go missing each year as a result of dementia, diminished capacity, foul play or other unusual circumstances. The Alzheimer's Foundation of America estimates that over five million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's disease, and that sixty percent of these are likely to wander from their homes. Alzheimer's disease and other dementia related illnesses often leave their victims disoriented and confused and unable to find their way home. According to the Alzheimer's Association, up to 50% of wanderers risk serious illness, injury or death if not found within 24 hours. The problem can be exacerbated greatly by national disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, that can, in a matter of hours, increase the number of missing persons by the thousands.

At least eight states, along with non-profit organizations such as the National Center for Missing Adults, Project Lifesaver International and the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, have developed programs to address various aspects of the problem of missing adults, but the need for a coordinated national approach, similar to the Amber Alert Program for children, still exists. In addition, financial support is needed for existing and new local and state programs.

The Missing Alzheimer's Disease Patient Alert Program, administered by the Department of Justice, is the only federal program that currently provides grant funding to locate vulnerable elderly individuals who go missing. Authorization for this program ceased in 1998, but Congress has continued to appropriate some monies for it through fiscal year 2008, when it appropriated \$940,000. Another federal law, Kristen's Act, had authorized annual grants in the amount of \$1 million for fiscal years 2001 through 2004 to assist law enforcement agencies in locating missing adults and for other purposes. Between fiscal years 2002 through 2006, Kristen's Act grants were

made through the Edward Byrne Discretionary Grants Program, primarily to the National Center for Missing Adults, a non-profit organization. In 2006, Congress appropriated \$150,000 for this purpose.

A. H.R. 632, THE "NATIONAL SILVER ALERT ACT"

H.R. 632 sets forth a comprehensive national program. It directs the Attorney General to establish a permanent national Silver Alert communications program within the Department of Justice to provide assistance to regional and local search efforts for missing seniors. The bill requires the Attorney General to assign a Department of Justice officer as a Silver Alert Coordinator.

The Silver Alert Coordinator acts as a nationwide point of contact, working with states to encourage the development of local elements of the network, known as Silver Alert plans, and to ensure regional coordination. The bill requires the Coordinator to develop protocols for efforts relating to reporting and finding missing seniors and to establish voluntary guidelines for states to use in developing Silver Alert plans. The bill requires the Coordinator to establish an advisory group (1) to help States, local governments and law enforcement agencies with Silver Alert plans, (2) to provide training and educational programs to states, local governments and law enforcement agencies, and (3) to submit an annual report to Congress. The bill also requires the Coordinator to establish voluntary minimum standards for the issuance of alerts through the Silver Alert communications network.

H.R. 632 directs the Attorney General, subject to the availability of appropriations, to provide grants to States for the development and implementation of programs and activities relating to Silver Alert plans. The bill authorizes \$5 million for fiscal year 2009 for this purpose. The bill also authorizes an additional \$5 million for fiscal year 2009 specifically for the development and implementation of new technologies. The Federal share of the grant may not exceed 50% and amounts appropriated under this authorization shall remain available until expended.

Importantly, the bill seeks to accomplish three purposes: the creation of a grant program, the promotion of best practices, and an increased awareness of the need for coordinated efforts to locate missing individuals. The bill authorizes a grant program for State-administered notification systems to help locate missing persons suffering from Alzheimer's disease and other dementia related illnesses. The grants are to be used to establish and implement Silver Alert systems or to make improvements to existing Silver Alert programs.

C. H.R. 423, THE "KRISTEN'S ACT REAUTHORIZATION"

Importantly, H.R. 632 includes the language from H.R. 423, the "Kristen's Act Reauthorization." H.R. 632 reauthorizes Kristen's Act (P.L. 106-468), which had authorized annual grants from 2001 through 2004 for the purpose of finding missing adults. Because of the incorporation of Kristen's Act into H.R. 632, grants are not limited to States, but may be awarded to public agencies and nonprofit organizations. The grants are to be used to (1) maintain a national resource center and information clearinghouse; (2) maintain a national database for the purpose of tracking missing adults who are endangered due to age, diminished mental capacity, or when foul play is suspected or the circumstances are unknown; (3) coordinate public and private programs that locate missing adults and reunite them with their families;