

would like to congratulate a number of outstanding women who will be recognized at the Somerset County's Commission on the Status of Women awards in New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District.

The Commission presents awards annually in celebration of National Women's History Month in March. This year there are 17 women being honored, including entrepreneurs, educators and hometown heroes whose community service is considered extraordinary.

This year's Education Award winner is Karyn Malinowski of Manville. Karyn is the director of the Rutgers Equine Science Center at the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station in New Brunswick.

Karyn has been a faculty member at Rutgers University since 1978. She is believed to be the first female equine-extension specialist in the nation.

I am pleased to congratulate Karyn Malinowski for her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE INCLUSIVE HOME DESIGN ACT

**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 10, 2009*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to announce the introduction of the Inclusive Home Design Act. This critical legislation will make more new homes accessible, or inclusive, for people with disabilities. I want to thank my colleagues SAM FARR, MADELEINE BORDALLO, and JIM MCGOVERN for joining me today as original cosponsors of this legislation. I would also like to thank Eleanor Smith of Concrete Change and Beto Barrera and the staff of Access Living for their tireless efforts to move this legislation forward. This legislation is supported by the Paralyzed Veterans of America and many other national and local disabilities rights organizations.

Currently, only five percent of new single-family homes and townhouses built with federal assistance require any design features that make it possible for people with mobility impairments to live in or even visit the homes. The remaining 95 percent are built with unnecessary architectural barriers.

The Inclusive Home Design Act is based on the concept of integrating basic accessibility features into newly-built homes and builds on the movement of establishing "visitability" standards. Visitability is an affordable, sustainable, and inclusive design approach that will improve the availability of accessible housing for individuals with mobility impairments, including disabled veterans and seniors.

Specifically, the legislation would require all newly-built single-family homes and townhouses receiving federal funds to meet four accessibility standards:

First, there must be at least one accessible, or "zero step," entrance into the home.

Second, the doorways on the main level of the home must be wide enough to accommodate a wheelchair.

Three, at least one bathroom on the main floor must be wheelchair accessible.

And finally, light switches and thermostats must be at a reachable height from a wheelchair.

Adopting these standards for a single family home is not prohibitively expensive. The average added cost for homes built with accessibility features is between \$100 and \$600. Retrofitting a home, on the other hand, can cost several thousand dollars.

Architects and builders would also have latitude in how they comply with the act. For example, the zero step entrance can be placed at the front, side, or back of the home. The accessible route can even go through an attached garage. In addition, the zero step entrance requirements can be waived if the terrain makes compliance impractical.

When homes are accessible, it benefits not only today's disability community but also all of us who have friends and family members with disabilities. Accessible homes also benefit many people who are not currently disabled but may experience a temporary injury or permanent disability during their lifetimes. In fact, 3 out of 10 people will face a disability before age 67.

In addition, by making more new homes accessible, we also make it possible for more seniors to age at home—an issue that is increasingly important as the population grows older. In 2000, there were 30.5 million people between 65–84 years old; that number will grow to 47 million by 2020. 58 percent of people over the age of 80 suffer from some kind of physical impairment. Often, the prohibitive cost of making existing homes accessible deprives seniors of their independence and pushes them into nursing homes. Allowing more people to age at home will both save taxpayers money and help improve the quality of life for our seniors.

Many towns and states have already incorporated visitability standards. This list includes Chicago, Naperville, Bolingbrook, and Urbana, Illinois; Atlanta, Georgia; Iowa City, Iowa; St. Petersburg, Florida; Pima County, Arizona; Vermont; Texas; Kansas; Minnesota; and others. The United Kingdom also passed a law in March 1998 mandating that every new home become accessible. A federal law in the United States will build on the momentum that has already been created.

Passage of the Inclusive Home Design Act would mean that all homes built with federal dollars would be accessible, and the number of homes available for people with disabilities would be greatly increased. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues to pass this legislation, the Inclusive Home Design Act, into law.

#### COMMENDING THE OUTSTANDING WOMEN OF SOMERSET COUNTY

**HON. LEONARD LANCE**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 10, 2009*

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of National Women's History Month, and I would like to congratulate a number of outstanding women who will be recognized at the Somerset County's Commission on the Status of Women awards in New Jersey's Seventh Congressional District.

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Month in March. This year there are 17 women being honored, including entrepreneurs, educators and hometown heroes whose community service is considered extraordinary.

This year's Education Award winner is Helen "Chickie" Haines of Hillsborough. Chickie has helped educate thousands of students in her 38 years with the Bound Brook School District.

She started as an elementary school teacher, and in 2004 became principal of the Lafayette and LaMonte elementary schools, earning the "Who's Who Among America's Teachers" award in 2002. Chickie has served on Hillsborough's Township Committee, Zoning Board, environmental commission and open space committee.

I am pleased to congratulate Helen Haines on her outstanding efforts and share her good work with my colleagues in the United States Congress and the American people.

#### STOCK MARKET RECOVERY ACT, H.R. 1406

**HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, March 10, 2009*

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, the stock market's loss over the last six weeks suggests that the policies of this Congress are magnifying the depths of this recession, not aiding its recovery. Let's look at recent events:

1. Stocks are now traded in a bear market that declined 20 percent since the President's inauguration. This decline is faster than any other President since the First World War. The decline is steeper than Presidents Hoover or Roosevelt experienced. In fact, by this point in the Roosevelt administration, the market showed gains.

2. The market decline accelerated as the Congress and President promulgated their policies:

a. From the year's-end to the inauguration, the market fell 5 percent.

b. From inauguration to Secretary Geithner's speech, the market rose 2.5 percent in anticipation of good economic policies.

c. From Secretary Geithner's speech to the budget release, the market fell 12 percent.

d. From the budget release to March 6, the market fell another 11.2 percent.

As details of congressional legislation and the Administration's plans were published, the market accelerated its fall. A number of "recession-proof" industries lost value after the President released his budget. Oil prices rose nearly 4 percent, but the value of American energy companies fell by the following amounts up to 20 percent.

In other words, Americans are paying higher gas prices while the American companies that hire our people for this sector expect to see lower returns on capital. This is not a good trend and sends a strong market signal to serve the U.S. market (where prices are higher) from offshore facilities (where costs are lower).

Congress should consider more than just spending and borrowing from abroad. Key policies that would make stocks more attractive include:

Suspending the Mark-to-Market rule that makes banks look less valuable than they actually are.