

Thomas Serpa of Lathrop; and stepchildren Scott Rosenquist, Kristen Wight, Wendy Frink, and Susan Rosenquist. Other survivors included grandchildren Nicole Vertar, Gregory Serpa, Marissa Serpa, Nicholas Serpa, Anthony Serpa, and Matthew Serpa; one great-granddaughter, Aria Serpa; 11 step-grandchildren and two step great-grandchildren; sisters Alma Carroll of San Francisco, Mary Compton of Fair Oaks and Margaret Buckingham of Cambria; and brother Edwin Serpa of Tracy.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring John Serpa for his unwavering leadership, and recognizing his accomplishments and contributions. He will be remembered as a highly respected Tracy businessman, deeply involved in community and civic affairs, and well known for his efforts in bettering and developing services for veterans under the auspices of his beloved Marine Corps League.

LEGISLATION TO AMEND THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986 TO PREVENT THE PAYMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION TO INDIVIDUALS DISCHARGED FOR DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I introduced today legislation that would prevent the payment of unemployment compensation to individuals fired for drug or alcohol use. Under current federal law, employees who are terminated by their employer for "misconduct" cannot collect unemployment compensation. However, since federal law does not clearly define misconduct, each state must develop its own definition. Consequently, more than one-third of states do not currently have a provision to prevent these individuals from receiving benefits, which are funded using scarce taxpayer dollars. These differing standards allow for lax treatment of these individuals when they apply for unemployment insurance benefits.

We must take steps to ensure that a fair and equitable standard is in place for unem-

ployment insurance eligibility. This common-sense legislation would strengthen the unemployment compensation system; ensuring benefits go to those who have lost their job for reasons outside their control. Under this legislation, individuals fired for drug or alcohol use in connection with work would also be required to secure new employment and meet state criteria before becoming eligible for unemployment compensation again. However, it would not require the recipient to undergo drug testing to receive unemployment compensation benefits.

At a time when state and federal resources are strained, rewarding individuals who willfully violate the law and workplace policies is fiscally irresponsible and unfair to law-abiding citizens.

In short, this legislation would create a fair and equitable standard, which not only protects the taxpayer, but also ensures displaced employees who do follow the law and workplace policies can continue to receive this assistance. I look forward to working with my colleagues to move this legislation through Congress.

NATIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH

HON. BILL FOSTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 2013

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the thousands of Americans who benefit from the work of social workers in observance of March being National Social Work Month. Social work has been identified as the profession charged with serving as the safety net of our society, thus serving and advocating for society's most vulnerable groups including children, the elderly, veterans, mentally ill, and so on. From its start in the 1960s, Social Work Month has been a nationwide effort. According to Social Work Pioneer Robert Cohen, "The initial idea of Social Work Month was to try to combat the widespread notion that social work was something anyone can do; or that it just involved people who were good Samaritans trying to help others. The profession has taken

a long time to demonstrate and explain the professional nature of social work."

While many Americans recognize the work of social workers in the community, many Americans are not aware of the noteworthy roles social workers have historically played in shaping our social policies. In fact, social work pioneer Frances Perkins, the first woman to serve in a presidential cabinet as Secretary of Labor, drafted a significant portion of the New Deal legislation related to the Social Security Act, labor laws including a minimum wage, child labor protections, worker's compensation, safety standards developed through OSHA, unemployment compensation, and so on. Through the decades, Social Work Month themes have evolved along with the profession. From "Doing Good Isn't Bad—It Isn't Easy Either" (March 1973) to the latest theme of 2013, "Weaving Threads of Resilience and Advocacy," this important month continues to celebrate the profession, and be a voice for all social workers.

I am proud to represent the state of Illinois which is home to a mega chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. NASW is a professional association of social workers that advocates for resources to meet the needs of clients, allocation of resources that is open, fair, and non discriminatory, and promotes social justice. Currently, NASW Illinois has 7000 members in eight districts throughout the state. Additionally, there are hundreds of social workers in my district providing supports to families, including a member of my staff. For instance, Big Brothers Big Sisters, an organization that has been helping change the lives of kids for over a century, is located in my district. Through mentoring, coaching, fundraising, and other activities, BBBS has consistently reported positive outcomes for youth including children that participate in BBBS are 46 percent less likely to use illegal drugs and 52 percent less likely to skip school.

I urge my colleagues to reflect on the valuable contributions of social workers in their respective districts and I acknowledge my social work colleagues serving in Congress with me today. I urge my colleagues to stand with me and recognize National Social Work Month.