

affects citizens—both favorably and unfavorably—are numerous. Many of the cases brought to my attention are severe. Casework is crucial because it addresses the real needs of people.

Second, members of the bureaucracy can make mistakes. A few years ago, for example, I helped an older man who needed kidney dialysis, but whose Medicare coverage was being cut off because the Social Security Administration thought he was dead. Casework helps reduce the frustration people feel toward what appears to be a massive, impersonal government.

Third, constituent service often alerts Congress to limitations in a law. For instance, farmer contacts about crop insurance regulations led to my pushing a measure which changed the law to allow individual waivers. Many programs, ranging from veterans benefits to regulatory policy, have been amended by Congress because of problems first brought to our attention by constituents asking for help.

CONCLUSION

Constituent service can be tough work for Members of Congress, and an unrelenting demand on our time. But in many ways casework is one of the most rewarding parts of the job. Passing legislation often requires difficult compromise and can take years. With casework, Members can see the impact of their work on the daily lives of individual citizens. Nothing gives more satisfaction than to see that my efforts made a difference and improved the quality of life for a constituent.

TRIBUTE TO A LEGACY OF EXCELLENCE

HON. RICHARD J. DURBIN

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program's legacy of excellence. For over 80 years, this program, from the 20th congressional district, has been a dominant force within the great tradition of Illinois high school basketball. The hard work, determination, and commitment to excellence of past and present players and coaches has led to the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program being named the United States all-time winningest boys basketball program.

The National Federation of High School Associations recognized this national title in its National High School Sports Record Book. According to the 1996 edition, the Centralia Orphans amassed a record of 1,760 wins to 755 losses from 1908 to 1995. This athletic achievement is testament to the program's dedication to excellence that has made the Centralia High School Boys Basketball Program an outstanding success.

I ask my colleagues to join me in a salute to all of the Orphan players, coaches, supporters, and parents who worked to achieve this extraordinary accomplishment.

TRIBUTE TO SELMA JEAN COHEN

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Selma Jean Cohen, a

Baltimorean who recently died after dedicating much of her life to helping others.

Mrs. Cohen, who died July 2 at the age of 75, was born in an era that did not encourage women to develop all their talents. But that did not stop her from marching to her own drummer and taking on new challenges. As a mother, wife, volunteer and professional woman, she found innumerable ways throughout her life to make a difference in her community and in the lives of hundreds of families she befriended in times of need.

In her early years of raising her two sons, Ellis and Jerome, Mrs. Cohen was a PTA president, a Cub Scout den mother and the president of the sisterhood at her synagogue. After her sons were grown, Mrs. Cohen began a career at the State department of health and mental hygiene where she became the director of nursing home bed registry, a position she held for 25 of her 34 years with the department.

But her work with the State was just part of her dedication to helping others. Mrs. Cohen and her husband, Leonard, whom she met at a Benny Goodman dance in 1940, have been weekend volunteers at the Ronald McDonald House in Baltimore for the past 10 years. In their work at the Ronald McDonald House, they comforted out-of-town families with very sick children at Baltimore area hospitals and made these families feel at home. She and Leonard also found time to do hospice work at Levindale Hebrew Geriatric Center and Hospital and help sick children at the Mount Washington Pediatric Hospital.

I urge my colleagues to join me in extending our condolences to the family of Selma Jean Cohen. Her cheer and energy will be missed by all who knew her and by all of us who believe that one person can make a difference.

THANK YOU, RISDEN WALL, FOR YOUR LOYAL SERVICE

HON. JACK FIELDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. FIELDS of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was with mixed emotions that I announced last December 11 my decision to retire from the House at the conclusion of my current term. As I explained at the time, the decision to retire was made more difficult because of the loyalty and dedication of my staff—and because of the genuine friendship I feel for each of them. They have served the men and women of Texas' 8th Congressional District in an extraordinary way.

Today, I want to thank one member of my staff—Risden Wall, a legislative assistant who is serving a congressional fellowship through the Brookings Institution. Risden is a senior special agent with the U.S. Customs Service who began his congressional fellowship in my office in January 1995.

Risden, a native of Ridgeland, SC, earned an associate degree from Brewton Parker Junior College in 1966, and received his bachelor's degree from Florida State University in 1970. From 1967 to 1969, he served in the U.S. Army as an airborne combat infantryman with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC, and as a rifleman/radio transmitting operator with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Republic of Vietnam.

After leaving the Army and obtaining his college degree, Risden went to work for the U.S. Customs Service in Miami, where he served as a "sky marshal," charged with deterring possible skyjacketings of domestic and international commercial flights. Soon thereafter, Risden served as a special agent in the Customs Service's Miami office—working to prevent narcotics smuggling, money laundering, fraud and other criminal activities. He served in that position for 12 years before moving to Washington to become a senior special agent at Customs Service headquarters, where he worked on financial investigations and undercover operations.

In 1986, Risden was asked to represent the Customs Service on the National Drug Enforcement Policy Board. On the board, he helped establish strategic priorities for all federal anti-narcotics activities. From 1986 to 1991, he served as the Customs Service's representative to the U.S. National Central Bureau of INTERPOL, coordinating investigative activities between 160 member countries, 20,000 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, the Justice Department and other authorities within the executive branch.

Prior to his fellowship, Risden served as the Customs Service's Northeast Area program manager. As such, he was responsible for overseeing all Customs Service investigations in the northeastern United States.

As a member of my staff, Risden has worked on banking, housing, veterans affairs, international relations, military affairs and judiciary issues—keeping me abreast of legislative developments in each of these areas and responding to constituent inquiries.

Risden is one of those hard-working men and women who make all of us in this institution look better than we deserve. I know he has done that for me, and I appreciate this opportunity to publicly thank him for the dedication, loyalty and professionalism he has exhibited throughout his tenure in my office.

Risden's future plans after I retire are as yet uncertain, but knowing him as well as I do, I am confident that the skills and professionalism he has demonstrated in my office will lead to continued success in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I know you join with me in saying "Thank you" to Risden Wall for his loyal service to me, to the men and women of Texas' 8th Congressional District, and to this great institution. And I know you join with me in wishing him and his lovely wife, Georgene, the very best in the future.

AWARDS PRESENTED TO OUT- STANDING HIGH SCHOOL SEN- IORS

HON. STEVEN SCHIFF

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 24, 1996

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the following graduating high school students from the First Congressional District of New Mexico who have been awarded the Congressional Certificate of Merit:

CERTIFICATE OF MERIT AWARD WINNERS 1996

Albuquerque Evening High School, Vera Lujan; Albuquerque High School, Monica Becerra; Bernalillo High School, Lance Darnell; Cibola High School, Jessica Shaw;