

FEDERAL AVIATION
AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. BOB FRANKS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 10, 1996

Mr. FRANKS of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H.R. 3539, a bill which would reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration. Although this bill contains many worthwhile provisions that will modernize and improve the FAA, I commend to my colleagues' attention an amendment I offered during committee consideration of this legislation that is of particular importance to my constituents, many of whom have been severely impacted by aircraft noise. Specifically, my amendment would establish the position of aircraft noise ombudsman within the FAA. My colleagues may recall that a nearly identical provision passed the House last March as part of H.R. 2276, the Federal Aviation Administration Revitalization Act of 1995.

The idea of an aircraft noise ombudsman is long overdue. In my home State of New Jersey, the FAA has either arrogantly dismissed or totally ignored the pleas from my constituents for relief from intolerable aircraft noise. After the Expanded East Coast Plan [EECP] was implemented by the FAA in 1987, it took years for the FAA to even react to the significant increase in aircraft noise over New Jersey that resulted from their policies. The adoption of my amendment would ensure that the American people have an advocate in the FAA bureaucracy who will represent the concerns of residents affected by airline flight patterns.

My amendment also gives citizens someone to turn to should they have a comment, complaint, or suggestion dealing with aircraft noise. As the experience in New Jersey demonstrates, the FAA views the very real concerns of constituents regarding aircraft noise as nothing more than a minor inconvenience. For example, when the FAA was flooded by telephone calls from irate citizens after the EECP was implemented, their response was to belatedly install an answering machine on a single telephone line which was constantly jammed and to which citizens were unable to get through. The insensitivity of this agency can no longer be tolerated. Our constituents deserve to talk to a real, live human being who can answer their questions about the decisions that directly affect their quality of life.

Madam Speaker, my amendment is extremely important to the people of New Jersey and to the residents of any area that could find themselves severely impacted after the FAA announces a change in flight patterns. Already, my congressional office has received inquiries from around the country asking for the phone number of the aircraft noise ombudsman. I am sure the citizens who hear aircraft noise constantly, be they in New Jersey, Denver, or St. Louis, will be heartened by the passage of H.R. 3539.

Of course, this new position will only be as effective as the person occupying it. This is why I will be recommending to the administrator of the FAA that a person from outside the FAA, preferably from a citizens' aircraft noise organization, be appointed to fill this position. For example, a member from New Jersey Citizens Against Aircraft Noise [NJCAAN]

would make an ideal aircraft noise ombudsman. NJCAAN members are personally familiar with the problem of aircraft noise, and understand the frustrations of citizens affected by aircraft noise.

Furthermore, NJCAAN members are knowledgeable about how the FAA bureaucracy operates. An aircraft noise ombudsman from NJCAAN would also have a reservoir of credibility with the public on this issue—something the FAA sorely lacks. For these reasons, I will be urging the FAA to carefully consider a NJCAAN member for this position.

Madam Speaker, Chairman DUNCAN has done a superb job on this legislation. I also commend Dave Schaffer and Donna McLean of the House Aviation Subcommittee staff for their hard work on this worthy bill.

Madam Speaker, my ombudsman provision is extremely important to the residents of any area of the Nation affected by aircraft noise. I urge my colleagues to vote yes for this excellent bill.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1316,
SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT
AMENDMENTS OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS J. BLILEY, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, earlier this summer, the Congress passed S. 1316, the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996, a bill which reauthorizes the Safe Drinking Water Act and makes many important reforms in the law. The President signed this legislation into law on August 6, 1996.

I am convinced that we would not have achieved these important reforms without the support and assistance of the Safe Drinking Water Act Coalition. The coalition is made up of representatives of State and local governments, and organizations representing all types of public water systems, including the National Governors' Association, the National League of Cities, the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, the American Water Works Association, the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of Water Companies, the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, the National Association of Counties, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Water Resources Association, and the National Rural Water Association.

The coalition worked tirelessly for many years to accomplish these important and necessary reforms in the Safe Drinking Water Act. The members of the coalition deserve our thanks for helping to improve the Safe Drinking Water Act to better protect public health and the environment.

A TRIBUTE TO JOSEPHINE
PIRACCI

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 11, 1996

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, every now and then in my position as a Congressman, I

have the privilege of honoring those people out there whose performance day in and day out improves the quality of life for an entire neighborhood or school or community. I call these people our silent heroes. That's because they do their job without remiss and all too often without the accolades they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to bring your attention to one such hero today, Ms. Josephine Piracci of Clifton Park, NY in my congressional district. Josephine has been a faithful employee of the Shenendehowa Public Library for 20 years now and has done more than her share in making the Clifton Park and Halfmoon area of New York a great place to live and raise a family.

I say that because what could be more critical to any community and especially its young people, than a library. And there's something even more special about a public library that just seems so American. I think it's that it embodies the free exchange of ideas and intellectual freedom that has allowed this country to thrive and has been the beacon drawing millions from distant lands throughout our history.

Now, how does Ms. Piracci fit into all this? Easy. For 20 years now, she has played an active role in helping others to expand their minds, be it a child forming their first sentences, or a businessowner researching the latest trends and technologies that might allow their business to expand and put someone else to work.

Josephine made this type of impact right from the beginning starting part-time as a children's librarian. And she didn't stop there, Mr. Speaker. Jo, as her friends and colleagues know her, went on to become director of the library by 1985 and has remained so ever since. During her tenure, she presided over the largest expansion in the history of the Shenendehowa Library. In fact, the library grew four times its size, from 4,500 square feet to 18,000 square feet.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, organizing and directing such a rapid and enormous change can be both exhilarating and frustrating. But Jo had a vision of a facility that would better serve all aspects of her community and the persistence to carry it through. Now that's what it takes to get the job done.

Mr. Speaker, I have always been one to judge people based on what they return to their community. By that measure, Josephine Piracci is a truly great American. I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and all Members of the House to rise with me now in tribute to her and her outstanding record of public service. She has certainly earned it.

AVIATION CADET ANNIVERSARY

HON. ROBERT K. DORNAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 11, 1996

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, October 11, 1996 will mark the 35th anniversary of the last person to graduate from the U.S. Air Force's Aviation Cadet Program. I graduated as an aviation cadet myself at the start of my military service in the Air Force. The Aviation Cadet Program actually started in 1917 and almost all rated officers in the Signal Corps, Army Air Corps, Army Air Forces, and U.S. Air Force were trained under this program.