

colleagues. I expect to offer this legislation at the beginning of the next Congress and hope to hear meaningful debate.

### CROOKED PENSION RETRIEVAL

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, September 28, 1996*

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to applaud the House of Representatives for its 391 to 32 vote on Thursday, September 26, 1996, on H.R. 4011, the Congressional Pension Forfeiture Act. This measure would prohibit a Member of Congress from collecting Federal retirement benefits if they are convicted of a felony. My vote on this much needed proposal was "aye."

My support of this measure was, of course, a given. Why? Well, H.R. 4011 was a descendant of my own proposal—H.R. 3342, the Anti-Bribery Act of 1991—from the 102d Congress. H.R. 3342 had its beginnings in the State of Pennsylvania, where public corruption linked with huge pension payouts led to my successful efforts there as a State senator to reform the system in the same way we are doing now. Public trust in public officials means just that: If you violate it, you should not be rewarded in any fashion for that violation.

I submit for the RECORD a press release from September 9, 1991—nearly 5 years ago to the day—regarding my early involvement in the issue of restoring public trust in public officials, and punishing those who violate that trust.

#### RESTORING THE PUBLIC TRUST

(By Congressman George Gekas)

Many of us can remember the images across our television scenes in the 1980's: Members of Congress videotaped accepting bribes as part of the "Abscam" investigation. These images burned in the minds of Americans and further deepened their suspicions about public officials in general.

Indeed, there have been too many instances over the past few decades where Members of Congress and other elected or appointed officials have betrayed the trust the public has placed in them by engaging in bribes or in conspiracies to defraud the government. We recently have seen some convictions from the so-called "Ill Wind" scandal that involved defense contractors bribing some Defense Department officials.

I believe that we need to send a clear signal that this type of activity cannot be tolerated among any public servant who works for the federal government. I have introduced legislation, "The Anti-Bribery Act," that would prove to be a strong deterrent to anyone considering engaging in an act of bribery. Under current law, if a Member of Congress, for instance, was convicted of bribery, he would be subjected to a prison sentence or a severe fine. He would, however, after going to jail, come out and continue to receive his federal pension. My legislation would prevent that from ever taking place, because that individual's pension or retirement benefit would be forfeited by reason of the bribery conviction.

When I was in the Senate of Pennsylvania, and there had been a spate of convictions of public officials, it did not take too long before the General Assembly acted on this type of legislation. I supported a bill, authored by Senator John Hopper of Camp Hill, that did

precisely the same thing—cut off the pension benefits from a convicted public official.

"The Anti-Bribery Act of 1991" would make sure that there would be no existing loopholes in federal statutes that would allow Members of Congress and other officials to receive any benefits after betraying the public trust. The public has a right to expect that all public servants—especially Members of Congress—have the highest degree of integrity in performing their duties. Those individuals who would stoop so low as to accept a bribe do not deserve to be the beneficiary of any retirement pay from the federal government. This legislation, in my estimation would send a clear message to all that any type of payoff to anyone working for our nation's taxpayers will not be tolerated or rewarded in any way, shape or form.

We in Congress must take the lead in restoring the public's faith in government. As I have said, there is a perception out there that we in Congress are unethical and corrupt. I believe that the majority of public officials are faithful public servants, but we must take a stronger stand against those who go about destroying what little faith the American people have left in their government.

I believe that my legislation is a major step forward in preventing corruption from taking place within the ranks of the federal government. It is my hope that my colleagues will come up to the plate and join me.

### TRIBUTE TO LEROY F. SMITH, JR., A REAL HERO

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, September 28, 1996*

Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to one of this Nation's heroes—Mr. LeRoy F. Smith, Jr. Professionally, LeRoy Smith is assistant director of emergency medical services for the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in Newark, NJ. Like most of us, LeRoy loves his career and uses his professional skills for the betterment of our world. What is extraordinary about LeRoy is that he always goes beyond the call of duty.

LeRoy began his emergency medical service career in 1969 as an ambulance driver. While in that position he became a New Jersey State Certified Emergency Medical Technician. That was the beginning of a sterling career of service to humanity. Over the years, LeRoy, a nearly lifelong resident of Newark, NJ, has shown his love, respect and caring for the city, its institutions and its people. He has volunteered his services and time to more than 30 programs and organizations. Presently, he is active with more than half of these groups. He has worked extensively with the youth of our community.

While there are many examples of LeRoy's valor, I would like to share one experience with my colleagues. Last year, LeRoy underwent successful heart surgery. Because of his caring, there was a deserved outpouring of prayers and support by the residents of Newark. Last month, LeRoy became a hero again when he rescued a drowning child. Never thinking about his own safety or survival, LeRoy saved another life, one of many saved throughout his career.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleagues will want to join me as I thank and commend

LeRoy F. Smith, Jr. for his heroism and humanitarianism. LeRoy has been recognized more than 400 times for his service. This year he received an honorary doctorate of humanities degree from Essex County College and the baseball season in Guaynabo, PR was dedicated in his name. It is fitting that his record of service be noted in the annals of American history. I also want to thank his family—his wife, Maria, and his two children, Michael Jason and Lee Ann, for sharing LeRoy with us.

### COMMENDING PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC CO. AND THE MONTE- REY BAY FUTURES NETWORK

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, September 28, 1996*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, Monterey County and many northern California areas have been challenged by military base closings and resulting job loss. In Monterey County, local government and business leaders have worked together to develop economic plans for base conversion and the future. A key participant was Pacific Gas and Electric Co. [PG&E], which for its role was honored with the Edison Electric Institute's Common Goals Award for customer satisfaction.

Tapan Munroe, PG&E's chief economist and manager of community economic vitality initiatives, came to Washington to receive the award from EEI President Thomas R. Kuhn in a Capitol Hill Ceremony.

PG&E's local manager chaired the effort that founded the Monterey Bay region Futures Network, called FUTURES, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the economic vitality of our region while maintaining environmental quality and the social quality of life.

Bruce R. Gritton, of the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute, who is president of FUTURES, says a PG&E-sponsored study "Vision and Strategies for Shaping the Monterey Region's Economic Future," provides FUTURES' conceptual anchor. Rob Stump, of PG&E's Monterey Division, continues to serve as a FUTURES officer. After the study, the University of California at Santa Cruz, opened the Monterey Bay Science and Technology Center at Fort Ord, the first reuse of the former military base.

I commend everyone involved in FUTURES Network for all of their good work for Monterey County. Congratulations to PG&E on winning the EEI Common Goals Award.

### THE UPDATED UNITED STATES- PUERTO RICO POLITICAL STA- TUS ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, September 28, 1996*

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the updated United States-Puerto Rico Political Status Act, H.R. 4281, which contains provisions regarding the role of