the Attorney General for good cause. Likewise, the special three-judge panel may terminate the work of the independent counsel if the counsel's work is deemed completed.

ARGUMENTS PRO AND CON

Supporters of the independent counsel law contend that it is necessary to investigate allegations of high-level misconduct in the executive branch. Only an independent counsel, chosen by a panel of judges, can provide the best assurance of a thorough and impartial investigation followed by a fair-minded prosecution or public dismissal of the charges. The Attorney General, in contrast, is a political appointee of the President, and might not be counted on to conduct an impartial review of allegations of misconduct by the President or his appointees.

Opponents respond that the law is too easily abused. Congress enacted the independent counsel statute to address those occasions, as with Watergate, where there is serious evidence of criminal misconduct by the President or high level government officials. An independent counsel operates with broad powers and an unlimited budget, outside the standard constraints of executive branch accountability, and should be rarely appointed. The Iran-contra affair and Watergate might justify appointment of a special counsel, but determining whether a Department Secretary told an FBI background reviewer the total amount of money he gave his former mistress does not. Such a case could be handled by the Justice Department.

REFORM PROPOSALS

There is a wide range of proposals for reforming the independent counsel law. Some favor outright repeal. They say that career Justice Department prosecutors can impartially investigate and prosecute cases of executive branch misconduct, and that the political process will hold the President accountable for prosecutorial abuse. After all, they observe, the Watergate cases were investigated and prosecuted without an independent counsel law.

Others support incremental changes to the law. One set of reforms would limit the circumstances when an independent counsel would be appointed. For example, the law could be limited to allegations of misconduct at the highest levels of government, such as the President, Vice President, and Attorney General, and to crimes committed in office. Likewise, the law could be amended to raise the threshold at which the Attorney General must ask the three-judge panel to name a special prosecutor.

Another set of reforms would place some checks on the powers of an independent counsel. The law, for example, could be amended to fix a time limit on the investigation, subject to extension by the appointing court if there has been an indictment or if the independent counsel has the evidence to justify further inquiry. The law could also be changed to limit the ability of the independent counsel to expand the scope of an investigation. Some have also proposed constraining spending on investigations by making them subject to annual congressional appropriations.

A third set of reforms would improve the integrity of the independent counsel process. One such proposal would make the job of independent counsel full time, permitting no representation of other clients. This reform would enhance public confidence in the impartiality of the investigation, and help expedite the proceedings.

CONCLUSION

I have consistently supported the independent counsel law, and approved of the appointment of a special prosecutor in the Iran-contra and Whitewater cases. I believe, however, that the process should be used more sparingly and subject to more contraints. Public confidence in the process has diminished as investigations drag on for years, at great expense.

The independent counsel law expires in 1999. We should use the next two years to review the current law, and consider reforms that would improve public confidence in the process, including limiting the use of the independent counsel law and making the process, when invoked, move more swiftly and less expensively.

HOORAY FOR THE LADY BULLDOGS

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, February 3, 1997, the Lady Bulldogs of Hazard High School in Hazard, KY, made a dream come true. That was the night they won the All ''A'' State Tournament by beating Lexington Catholic 53 to 45.

This was the fourth time in history that Hazard High School had a team in a basketball State championship. In fact, the Lady Bulldogs of 1996–97 had a lot to live up to—every Hazard team that had gone to the State championships before had won. Were they up to the challenge?

In their opening game of the tournament, the Lady Bulldogs beat the defending All ''A'' champions from Louisville Holy Cross 61 to 34. This was a sign of great things to come. After two more games, the Lady Bulldogs faced Lexington Catholic—and the rest is history. With effective offense, tenacious defense, skillful shooting, and tremendous coaching, the Lady Bulldogs claimed victory for their own.

Today, the 1996–97 Lady Bulldogs—Jaime Steele, Dee Sammons, Leah Cornett, Betsy Boggs, Charlotte Sizemore, Lori Graves, Carolyn Alexander, Tracy Kershaw, Nea Rogers, Christy Dunigan, and Jennifer Sharp—are walking tall. Each one a dedicated, hard-working young lady. Each one with the character and perseverance of a champion, not because she won a State tourney, but because she dared to pursue the dream.

The victory, however, is not theirs alone. Their coach, William ''Bill'' Fannin, began to lay the groundwork over a decade ago. In 1985, he took on the coaching job, and with patience, understanding, hard work, and love in his heart, he helped show the Lady Bulldogs what it takes to be winners—not just on the court, but also in school and their community.

Of course, Coach Fannin had a little help. Coach ''Cos'' Hugh Cosimini; coach Frieda Fannin, Bill's wife; and coach Candi Fannin, Bill's daughter, put a lot of time, energy, and heart into building the Lady Bulldog team we know today.

The community of Hazard also deserves some of the credit for their staunch support of the team. And, I would be leaving out an important part of the team if I didn't mention the Hazard cheerleaders, whose spirit at the games helped rally the Lady Bulldogs to victory. In fact, both the Lady Bulldog cheerleaders and the Hazard boy's team cheerleaders won first place in their competitions during the All ''A'' Tournament.

We all know that it's not whether you win or lose—it's how you play the game. Certainly, these Lady Bulldogs played fairly, with dignity and pride. But it sure is a great feeling to actually win the game. Today, I congratulate the Hazard Lady Bulldogs and their coaches. Good work on a job well done.

CONGRESSMAN FRANK LUCAS HONORS EIGHT OKLAHOMANS WHO HAVE BEEN HONORED AS ''CIVIL RIGHTS TRAILBLAZERS''

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 12, 1997

Mr. LUCAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor eight Oklahomans who were recently honored as ''Civil Rights Trailblazers.'' The Oklahoma Historical Society's Black Heritage Committee acknowledged the commitment to civil rights that these leaders have made. The following were honored on February 6, 1997.

Former Oklahoma Representative Hannah Diggs Atkins was a State representative for 12 years and served as a delegate to the United Nations General Assembly under President Jimmy Carter. She is also a member of the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame and the Afro-American Hall of Fame.

David Boren is a former Governor and Senator from Oklahoma. Among other things, he chaired the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and was a cochair of the 1993 Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress. He currently serves as president of the University of Oklahoma.

Rev. W.K. Jackson currently preaches at the Oklahoma City St. John Baptist Church. He has served as president of the Baptist Ministers Union, the Progressive Oklahoma Baptists State Convention, and the Coalition of Civic Leadership.

Ms. Rubye Hall is the current chair of the Oklahoma Historical Society's Black Heritage Committee. She is a life-long educator who is an emeritus member of the Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors.

Mr. John Kirkpatrick formed the Kirkpatrick Foundation in the 1970's and has been honored by the Oklahoma City Federation of Colored Women's Clubs with an Achievement Award in 1992. He and his wife Eleanor have been very active philanthropists.

Ms. Clara Luper was an active civil rights leader in the 1960's who led a number of lunch counter sit-ins in Oklahoma City to break down Jim Crowe Laws.

George Nigh is a former Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and State representative of Oklahoma and currently serves as president of the University of Central Oklahoma. In addition, he is a member of the Oklahoma Hall of Fame and was inducted into the U.S. Jaycees Ten Outstanding Young Americans Hall of Leadership.

Ms. Ursula Sanders is the current president of the Baptist Ministers Wives of the National Baptist Congress of Christian Education and served for 16 years as president of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in Oklahoma.

I want to personally salute these leaders and thank them for the progress that has been