Samoa will lose fully one-third of its total economy. This will be devastating.

This legislation is a start toward addressing this problem. The commission established will be directed to examine, among other things, recent changes in trade law and the current and future impact these changes will have on American Samoa.

A TRIBUTE TO CONCORD COLLEGE, ATHENS, WV, 125 YEARS OF EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, on May 10, 1875, 70 students arrived at a rough frame building for the first session of classes, under the leadership of Capt. James Harvey French as principapal—a result of action taken by the West Virginia Legislature to establish a branch of the State Normal School at Concord in the county of Mercer.

On February 28, 1997 Concord College will observe its 125th anniversary—celebrating one and one-quarter centuries of excellence.

This expansion of higher education was motivated by the educational reform movement of the 1870's and the need for producing qualified teachers for elementary and secondary schools. The enabling legislation provided that no State funds were to be used in the construction of the school building. Residents of the town raised over $1,700 by subscription to erect the first building on land donated by William Harvey Martin, at the site of the present Athens Elementary School.

By 1885, the State Legislature, impressed by the service given to the State by the school, appropriated $5,000 for a new brick building, which was completed in June 1887.

But fire was to claim the downtown location of the Normal School in November 1910, rousing a determined faculty and students to hold classes the very next day wherever they could find space throughout town. The current campus was selected as the new site, and it was purchased by the people of Athens from the Vermillion family for that purpose, only to have a second fire in 1912 that was even more damaging than the first—but again, a determined faculty and residents of the local community banded together to rebuild and rededicate Concord School.

The college awarded its first baccalaureate degree to three graduates in June 1923, and in 1931 the institutions' name changed to Concord State Teachers College.

Today, under the current leadership of President Jerry Beasley, Concord has grown to a comprehensive State college of 2,400 students studying in Athens, Beckley, and other southern West Virginia locations. The town in which is has always been located even changed its name to Athens in 1896 in recognition of Concord's role as a center of education.

Concord College, under previous Presidents such as Cap. James Harvey French, whose early title was ''Principal,'' to President Joseph Franklin Marsh, to President Meredith Freeman, to the excellent administration of its current President Jerry Beasley, has expanded far beyond its original teacher preparation mission—with programs of study offered in business, social work, the arts and sciences and the other pre-professional fields.

The college believes strongly in the advantages that a broad liberal arts education can add to the job preparation skills which the public now demands. In an era in which job change and career shifts are on the rise, the value of this fundamental education—learning how to learn for a lifetime—is even more pronounced.

Mr. Speaker, it is my high honor to represent the people who live in southern West Virginia—the State's third Congressional District—where Concord College was established and where it is now a thriving campus.

I take this opportunity to pay tribute to Concord College, to its faculty, students and to its many friends as it celebrates its 125th anniversary on February 28, 1997. At 11 a.m. on that date, a full academic processional will enter the Alexander Fine/Arts Center of the Athens campus for a program commemorating the college's beginning—and its future.

I join with the officials of Concord College, the newly elected Governor Cecil Underwood, the State College System board of Directors, the local delegation to the West Virginia Legislature and representatives of Concord's constituent and support groups, in congratulating Concord College for this enormous success in serving family and student needs in Athens and surrounding areas.

Mr. Speaker, it is through these kinds of lasting efforts continued down through centuries and more, that we continue to be able to improve and enhance higher education for all our people. From its inception, the local people of Athens, the students and faculty, and the enormously talented Presidents named above who served Concord from 1872 to 1997, all sharing their ideas and their ideals and acting upon them for the common good—have culminated in the highly respected and greatly loved Concord College that we pay tribute to today.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: RECOGNITION, RESPECT, AND RELIANCE

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. McINTYRE, Mr. Speaker, as the Members know, February is Black History Month, which our Nation has devoted to recognizing and honoring the contributions and accomplishments African-Americans have made to this country. Across our great Nation, schools, businesses, churches, and civic organizations are making a special effort to proclaim the importance of African-Americans to this Nation's progress and success.

We make this special effort for two fundamentally important reasons. First, black people of this Nation have suffered unfairly through generations of slavery and oppression. Today, I am grateful that we are working together to ensure that all people are treated equally, both in word and deed. The second reason we mark this time with Black History Month is that African-Americans have made substantive and vitally important contributions to this Nation's progress and success. Quite simply, we would be much diminished as a nation if it were not for the hard work, insight, activism, leadership, and excellence found within the African-American community.

Today, I want to focus on the pattern of black history that begins with our Nation's earliest days and ends in a future that is brighter for all of us. That pattern has three fundamental components: Recognition, Respect, and Reliance. I believe that we must recognize African-Americans for their contributions. I believe that respect for African-Americans flows out of our recognition of their importance in America. Finally, recognition and respect creates a healthy reliance on African-Americans that crosses all racial and economic groups. I stand here today in order to help move forward our efforts to recognize Black historical accomplishments, to urge respect for our African-American neighbors, and to promote a cross-racial reliance that fosters a more perfect Union.

Recognition begins with an understanding that African-Americans have made substantive and vitally important contributions to the cultural, economic, athletic, scientific, and spiritual advancement of the United States. They have been a positive factor in nearly all major events in American history and have both influenced and changed American life and culture. Unfortunately, many contributions made by African-Americans remain unknown among most Americans.

We could spend many hours exploring African-American contributions to American life. Today, I urge you to take some time and explore the remarkable achievements of African-Americans on your own. When we recognize the continuous and important impact they have had on our nation, we will agree that a future full of African-American accomplishments is a good one.

Consider the impact African-Americans have had in politics and civil rights. Of course, Blacks have always been politically active. Today, we should call special attention to Blacks who serve their nation and communities in ways unimaginable one hundred years or even fifty years ago. Blacks now serve in unprecedented numbers in elected and appointed positions at all levels of government. Mayors David Dinkins, Tom Bradley, Coleman Young, and others have had a positive impact on some of our most important cities. Douglass Wilder served as governor of my neighbor state of Virginia. In my home district, several black leaders have served on the city council, school board, board of county commissioners, community college board members, state board of transportation, numerous other state boards and commissions, state legislature, and in government positions at all levels, including Congress, for many years with distinction. The civil rights advances in our nation could not have been made without these fine citizens. We must recognize the importance Blacks have in shaping our political lives.

We should also recognize Blacks for their contributions to advancing American science and technology. Blacks have been vitally important inventors and scientists from our nation's earliest days. Did you know that Onesimus, a black slave, was experimenting with smallpox vaccines in the 1720s? This pioneer of modern medicine was followed by others such as Dr. Charles Drew, who engineered blood transfusions; and Samual Kountz, who made kidney transplants more