

her away from her beloved San Antonio, her neighbors and many friends in the Lone Star State are hopeful that she will eventually return home; and

Whereas, In this, as in all of her endeavors, Ms. Conley has enjoyed the love and support of her family, which includes her husband, attorney Jim Conley, and four children: James, Jason, John, and Karyne Jalon; and

Whereas, Both in her personal life and in her professional service, the Honorable Karyne Jones Conley has exhibited an abiding concern for the well-being of her fellow Americans, and she is indeed deserving of recognition as she pursues this new chapter of her life; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 75th Legislature of the State of Texas, Regular Session, 1997, hereby congratulate former State Representative Karyne Jones Conley on her new position with SBC Telecommunications, Inc., and extend to her warmest best wishes for continued success; and, be it further

Resolved, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Ms. Conley as an expression of highest regard by the Texas House of Representatives and Senate.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2015,
BALANCED BUDGET ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVID E. SKAGGS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am voting for this bill because I believe it addresses many of the priorities and concerns of the American people. It sets us on a course toward a balanced budget while meeting the important needs of children, working families, and legal immigrants.

The bill provides \$24 billion to make sure that the most vulnerable among us, poor and uninsured children, have access to health care. This is perhaps its best feature. Using revenue from an additional tobacco tax, the bill enables States to provide Medicaid benefits for up to 5 million children who are currently uninsured.

The House-Senate conference report also undoes some of the harmful and unnecessarily harsh provisions contained in the welfare reform law. It restores disability and Medicaid for legal immigrants and extends food stamp eligibility for people making the transition from welfare to work. This bill also provides minimum benefits for refugees and asylees.

These provisions help mend holes in the safety net through which children, legal immigrants, and working poor were likely to slip.

This bill charts a path toward a balanced budget. Make no mistake, though—it assumes great spending discipline on the part of future Congresses in order to meet this goal. That discipline will be difficult—perhaps impossible—to sustain, and it would have made more sense to set a course that relies less on back-loaded cuts in later years.

If this conference report is more responsible, both fiscally and socially, than the original House bill, it also contains serious flaws. Most important, Medicare provisions fail to address the structural problems that threaten this program in the long term.

Cutting payments to hospital and providers is palliative, not curative. Very likely, many of

these cuts will be paid for through increased premiums on private insurance and other steps to pass costs on to other health-care consumers.

Two provisions, the Medicare savings accounts and the private fee-for-service plans, will likely skim healthier and the wealthier beneficiaries from the Medicare-risk pool. They will leave the program with higher costs but fewer dollars at the very time demand is ready to explode.

In addition to problematic cuts in Medicare, cuts in Medicaid unfairly single out those hospitals now serving the indigent. This will have a serious impact on Colorado hospitals in particular.

In short, if the conference report has much to recommend, it also leaves much undone and much that needs to be improved. And yet, on balance, Mr. Speaker, I believe the merits of this bill outweigh its failures and flaws.

I voted against this bill when it was first considered by the House; I am voting for the conference report. The conference report substantially improves the earlier bill and remedies most of the defects in last year's welfare reform law. It sets a course toward a balanced budget without putting the well being of citizens at risk. It deserves support.

TRIBUTE TO THE BRONX PUERTO
RICAN DAY PARADE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with joy that I rise to pay tribute to the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade, on its ninth year of celebrating the culture and contributions of the Puerto Rican community to our Nation.

The Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade will be held on Sunday in my South Bronx Congressional District. The event is the culmination of a series of activities surrounding Puerto Rican Week in the Bronx.

Under the leadership of its founder, Mr. Angel L. Rosario, and its president, Mr. Francisco Gonzalez, the parade has grown into one of the most colorful and important festivals of Puerto Rican culture in all five boroughs of New York City and beyond.

The parade brings together people from all ethnic backgrounds, including Puerto Ricans from the island and all across the Nation.

It is an honor for me to join once again the thousands of people who with pride will march along the Grand Concourse in celebration of our Puerto Rican heritage. The Puerto Rican flag and other ornaments in the flag's red, white, and blue will gracefully decorate the festival.

The parade ends at Joyce Kilmer Park, where live music, Puerto Rican food, crafts, and other entertainments await partakers. It is expected that this year's parade will surpass last year's half-million visitors.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade on its ninth year of strengthening ties and bringing joy to the South Bronx community.

REAUTHORIZING ISTE A

HON. CHARLES F. BASS

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. BASS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, to bring to the attention of the House the importance of reauthorizing ISTE A in a fashion that recognizes and maintains the important role of public transportation.

Even in my rural home State of New Hampshire, transit is a vital lifeline for many residents. In fact, a recent report entitled "Dollars and Sense: The Economic Case for Public Transportation in America", cites Advance Transit of Lebanon, NH, for its contribution to the economic vitality of Grafton County and neighboring Windsor County, VT. I would commend my colleagues' attention to the entirety of this report, which provides an impressive summary of mass transit's benefits.

In closing, I would like to again remind my colleagues that the benefits offered by public transit, and indeed all improvements to our Nation's transportation network, will be threatened without the necessary funding to reauthorize ISTE A. As we all know, committing the revenues generated from transportation taxes to improvements to our Nation's public infrastructure, including transit, will allow our great nation to move forward with economic growth and prosperity.

85TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GIRL
SCOUTS OF THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

HON. VIC FAZIO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. FAZIO of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate and celebrate the 85th anniversary of an organization that has been providing young women with skills and opportunities that enable them to reach their full potential, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America.

For nearly a century, the Girl Scouts have been empowering young women to make decisions that will enhance their life, to develop self-esteem, and make a contribution to their communities. The Girl Scouts are the largest voluntary organization for girls in the entire world, with more than 8,500,000 girls in more than 130 countries.

In particular, I want to recognize a special group of Girl Scouts from my district and the surrounding area, the Tierra del Oro Girl Scout Council. The Tierra del Oro Girl Scout Council serves more than 19,500 girls in fourteen counties: Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, El Dorado, Glenn, Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Sierra, Solano, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. I know that many of my constituents have benefited from belonging to such an outstanding organization.

This year, the Girl Scouts of the United States of America [GSUSA] celebrate their 85th anniversary. The Girl Scouts were founded in 1912 by Juliette Gordon Low in Savannah, GA. Ms. Low's vision was hopeful and far-reaching: to provide opportunities and partnerships between young girls and adults, to