

To further reach kids on a grassroots level, Nickelodeon will kick-off "The Big Help-on-the-Road," this Sunday in Washington. This mobile Big Help headquarters features video-based interactive kiosks, on-site volunteer activities, and information about local volunteer opportunities. "The Big Help-on-the-Road" will travel to local communities across the country—urban and rural, large and small—to champion the spirit of kid's voluntarism.

I hope you will join me in saluting Nickelodeon and its partner organizations in "The Big Help." These include: 4-H, American Camping Association, The American Humane Association, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of America, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, the Caption Center, Earth Force, Easter Seals, Feed the Children, Girl Scouts of the USA, Girls Inc., Habitat for Humanity, Keep America Beautiful, National P.T.A., National Wildlife Federation, Points of Light Foundation, Ronald McDonald Charities, Safe America Foundation, Second Harvest, The U.S. Department of Education, Youth Service America, YMCA of the USA, and YWCA of the USA.

I'd like to commend Herb Scannell, president of Nickelodeon, for his corporate leadership and commitment to empowering kids to make a difference. I would also like to commend Marva Smalls, senior vice president at Nickelodeon, and a constituent of mine, for organizing "The Big Help" program.

Finally, I would like to salute the millions of kids across the country who are volunteering their time and efforts to make their world a better place. They should serve as an example to all of us.

OHIO CITIZENS AGAINST LAWSUIT ABUSE

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge a group of Ohioans who have come together to speak out on the issue of lawsuit abuse. Because of their ongoing concern, local citizens have volunteered their time to organize Ohio Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse [OCALA] and to undertake a public awareness campaign about what they perceive as the problems of lawsuit abuse.

Based in Columbus, Ohio Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse focuses their efforts in informing and educating Ohio residents about an issue that has statewide and national implications for all Americans. The costs of lawsuit abuse can include higher costs for consumer products and services, higher medical expenses, greater taxes, and fewer jobs due to lost business expansion and foregone product development. This is not a new concern for many of us in the House of Representatives, but one which must be addressed.

OCALA wants to help prevent unnecessary lawsuits that do more harm than good and bring balance, fairness, responsibility, and restraint to our court system. OCALA supporters believe that through education, there will be change in public understanding, attitudes, and behavior, and they have the opportunity to play a vital role in reforming the legal system.

This nonprofit grassroots organization has raised local funds to run educational media

announcements and provide speakers for other organizations and citizens' groups across the State. They hope these actions will raise awareness of the lawsuit abuse issue and help legislators arrive at fair and equitable legislative solutions.

Gov. George Voinovich has declared September 22–27 as Lawsuit Abuse Awareness Week throughout the State of Ohio. I want to commend all the individuals who are involved in Ohio Citizens Against Lawsuit Abuse for their dedication and commitment. They are helping elected Federal and State officials address serious issues. I commend their work on behalf of our State.

TRIBUTE TO VIRGIL MURPHY

HON. JAY W. JOHNSON

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. JOHNSON of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Virgil Murphy, an honored leader and public servant from Bowler, WI.

Virgil is currently the president of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians in northeast Wisconsin and he is retiring at the age of 77, after a lifetime of service and achievement. He is a stalwart fixture in the community, having held the positions of vice president, tribal treasurer, tribal council member, housing director, and chairman of the Mohican Elderly Steering Committee.

Even in retirement, Virgil will continue to be an honored elder and his advice and leadership will be relied upon for the tribe's future endeavors.

His concern for the tribe's economic well-being and unity is well-known. His devotion for his family is plain to all who know him. His service to his tribe and to his country as a U.S. Army veteran will always be remembered.

Please join me in thanking Virgil Murphy for his years and years of dedication and wishing him the best in the future.

U.S. ARMY RESEARCH LABORATORY ANNOUNCES SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ACADEMIC RECOGNITION SYSTEM [STARS] FELLOWS

HON. WILLIAM (BILL) CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, recently, Dr. John Lyons, Director, U.S. Army Research Laboratory [ARL] announced the first recipients of ARL's Science and Technology Academic Recognition System [STARS] fellowships for students enrolled in historically black colleges and universities and other minority institutions. I am pleased to congratulate this year's recipients: LaDonna Nettles from Gautier, MS, Makeda Smith from Birmingham, AL, and Theodore Anthony from Baltimore, MD. Both Ms. Nettles and Ms. Smith are students at Xavier University and Mr. Anthony is a student at Morgan State University.

The STARS initiative is designed to increase the number of minority scientists and

engineers as we enter the millennium. It provides tuition and expenses for the senior undergraduate year and 2 years of graduate school. STARS awards can total \$100,000 each of the 3 years. Information about the program may be obtained by writing: Betty Irby, Senior Analyst of ARL, U.S. Army Research Laboratory, 2800 Power Mill Road, Adelphi, MD 20783, ATTN: AMSRL-SP. I encourage all interested parties to learn more about this valuable program.

THE CREDIT UNION AUDIT IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation, the Credit Union Audit Improvement Act of 1997, I am introducing with my colleague, Mr. BACHUS of Alabama. As Members of this body know, our Nation's insured credit unions are a vital part of our financial services system. Therefore, the accuracy of their financial records is of utmost importance. It is important to the people trusting their money with these institutions, to the regulators doing their job and to the taxpayers who actually ensure these institutions.

It is with this in mind that I introduce the Credit Union Audit Improvement Act. My legislation would do several things. It would amend the Federal Credit Union Act [the act] to require each federally insured Federal and State credit union to: prepare financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles [GAAP] and to have an independent audit performed by an independent licensed accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards [GAAS]; prepare an annual written assertion about the effectiveness of the credit union's internal controls over financial reporting; obtain a written report—or attestation report—from an independent licensed accountant regarding management's report on internal controls; and prepare an annual written assertion about the credit union's compliance with specified laws and regulations.

Under the legislation, the National Credit Union Administration [NCUA] would be able to exempt smaller credit unions with less than \$10 million in assets. The bill would also specifically require credit unions to engage only those external persons who meet applicable state licensing requirements to perform services subject to these requirements.

This legislation is in response to a final ruling by the NCUA on financial audits of credit unions. The final rule, effective December 31, 1996, allows compensated, nonlicensed persons to audit a credit union's financial information and internal controls. This is in direct contravention to most State accountancy statutes, which require auditors to be licensed. Several State boards of accountancy, including the one in my home State of Florida, have written in protest of this rule. Florida State law states that only certified public accountants can attest as an expert in accountancy to the reliability or fairness of presentation of financial information. The NCUA, in response to several States' inquiries, has made clear its intention to preempt these State laws, support a credit