

While giving hospitals time to prepare for a completely overhauled payment policy may be prudent, we should not allow them to continue abusing the current policy. The second bill I am introducing today, the Hospital Outpatient Department Truth-in-Advertising Act of 1997, would reduce hospitals' incentives to build, purchase, and lease freestanding clinics. Specifically, it would define as HOPD's only those facilities that are located on the same campus as an inpatient, acute-care hospital. Facilities reimbursed as HOPD's on or before September 25, 1997, would be exempted.

I urge my fellow Members of Congress to join with me in passing these crucial pieces of legislation. Together, we can modernize Medicare payment policy, lower our constituents' health care costs, keep healthy competition alive, and show the Nation that we will not tolerate abuse and waste of Medicare tax dollars.

THE IRISH POTATO FAMINE

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a resolution that honors the victims of the Great Irish Potato Famine, honors the millions of brave emigrants who rose from the tragedy of the famine to make profound contribution to America, and encourages the British and Irish Governments to make a renewed effort for peace in Northern Ireland.

This year is the 150th anniversary of the worst year of the Great Irish Potato Famine, which began in 1845 and continued to 1850. Massive poverty, disease, and starvation plagued hundreds of thousands throughout Ireland. Even today, 1847 is still known to all people of Irish descent as Black 47.

By the end of the famine, an estimated 1.5 million people had died of starvation or disease. Millions more risked their lives on "coffin ships" to seek a new life in America. These brave emigrants paved the way for the millions of Irish-American descendants today.

Recently, a new British Parliament, led by Tony Blair, and a new Irish Government, led by Bertie Ahern, have been elected to office. Also, Prime Minister Blair expressed regret about Britain's role in the famine. With the healing of old scars and the promise of the new administrations, Ireland has a new opportunity for peace and prosperity. The people of Ireland deserve a future free from violence, religious hate, or famine.

Mr. Speaker, the American descendants of those brave emigrants have made tremendous contributions to our society and to the American way of life. Irish-Americans have worked hard to become police officers, fire fighters, teachers, doctors, and even Members of Congress. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

FARMERS AGREE: TIERED PRICING PROMOTES WATER CONSERVATION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, as the author of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act of 1992 [CVPIA] that modernized the purposes and operations of one of the largest water projects in the United States, I was delighted to read recently that some of those who have most vociferously opposed passage and implementation of that landmark law are coming around to the side of reform.

The objective of the law was to bring the Central Valley project into the modern age—when the massive subsidies, unlimited contracts, and indifference to environmental and fishery destruction that long characterized the CVP's operations were rejected in favor of managing the project in a more financially and environmentally responsible manner.

One of the key devices in that law is the use of tiered pricing in new water contracts to encourage the most efficient use of water resources. In the past, the CVP has provided millions of acre feet of water to irrigators at enormously subsidized prices—often to grow marginal or surplus crops on low-quality, high-polluting land. Indeed, some irrigators continue to launch litigative and legislative efforts to overturn the law so they can continue to enjoy these multibillion dollar subsidies at the expense of the taxpayers.

Tiered pricing charges users progressively higher—while still subsidized—prices based on the amount of water they use in order to encourage efficient use and minimize runoff that can contaminate groundwater, rivers, and streams. Irrigators denounced tiered pricing as unfair and predicted it would not work.

How gratifying it is then, to read the "Summary of Grassland Basin Drainers' Drainage Reduction Activities" for August 28, 1997, in which we learn that, within their own districts, many of these very same farmers have turned to tiered pricing—to achieve the same objectives as the CVPIA.

Most water districts in the drainage area have implemented tiered water pricing to encourage farmers to manage water deliveries carefully and to reduce drainage water volume and selenium load. Several districts have targeted drain water reduction, specifically, by implementing a separate tiered pricing structure for preirrigation.

The report then details some of the specific programs in the San Joaquin Valley drainage area which receives substantial CVP deliveries out of the Delta, and concludes as follows:

"All of these programs have encouraged farmers to select efficient water management practices that reduce surface and subsurface drain water in the 1997 crop year."

I am personally gratified, Mr. Speaker, to learn that the irrigators themselves have come to accept the beneficial value of tiered pricing, and I look forward to their joining us in our ongoing efforts to implement other provisions of the CVPIA.

HONORING SISTER JOANNE FEDEWA

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 25, 1997

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in paying tribute to an outstanding humanitarian, Sister Joanne Fedewa. On October 5, 1997, Sister Joanne will be honored for her 50 years of dedicated service to God, the Catholic Church, and her community.

As a member of the Sisters of the Living Word, Sister Joanne obtained the foundation that led to her work as an educator, administrator, and spiritual advisor. For 30 years, Sister Joanne taught or served as principal at Catholic schools in Minnesota, Illinois, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Michigan. Sister Joanne spent much of her teaching career in predominantly African-American communities. I know that she considers the establishment of a Catholic school in an African-American parish in Little Rock, AR, to be one of her finest achievements. Through teaching, Sister Joanne inspired thousands of children to further their education. More importantly she instilled in them the importance of faith and the joy of God's love.

In 1989, Sister Joanne was appointed pastoral coordinator of Christ the King Parish. In this capacity, Sister Joanne founded the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults Program, programs for eucharistic ministers, and other parish education and sacramental programs. She collaborated with the ministers of service in developing a program for underprivileged youth in Flint.

In addition to her duties as pastoral coordinator, Sister Joanne serves on the Flint Catholic Urban Ministry Board which oversees ministry of the Dukette Intercultural Center in its mission to sponsor events in Flint's core city Catholic parishes. As a leader in the civil rights movement, Sister Joanne is widely credited with bringing to our attention the significant contributions of African-Americans to the Catholic Church.

As an advocate for those most vulnerable in our society, Sister Joanne regularly visits the homebound, hospitals, jails, and nursing homes. As busy as she is, Sister Joanne always has time for the parishioners of Christ the King Parish, encouraging them to use their gifts to serve others. Her tireless work on parish committees and in the day to day administration of the parish is appreciated by all. For those who cite a shortage of time, Sister Joanne serves as a remarkable role model.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honor and a privilege for me to pay tribute to Sister Joanne Fedewa. She has served our Lord and our community with the greatest devotion and is deserving of our praise. This occasion provides me the opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to Sister Joanne. I know that I am a better person for having known her, and Flint is certainly a better place because of her presence.