That is why, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join in me in proudly saluting the Southampton Hospital Quarter Backers as the group enters its 21st year of proud service to the hospital and the East End of Long Island.

EXCHANGE CLUB OF LONG BRANCH HONORS POLICEMEN OF THE YEAR

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this evening, Wednesday, March 4, 1998, the Exchange Club of Long Branch, NJ, will honor two officers as Policemen of the Year as part of its annual crime prevention week.

Cpl. Howard Townsend and rookie officer Michael Ahart are being honored for preventing a possible case of arson. On May 7, 1997, the police received a call to respond to a person possibly attempting to burn down a house. Cpl. Townsend and Officer Ahart responded to the scene and confronted an individual at the back door of the residence. The subject lit a cigarette lighter and instructed the officers not to come any closer or he would set fire to the house. The two officers responded to the emergency like the well-trained professionals that they are. Cpl. Townsend called for fire engines, paramedics, ambulances and a negotiator. He prudently advised the emergency vehicles not to use their lights or sirens to avoid further alarming the individual in the house. Officer Ahart remained with the subject, talking until he was able to get close enough to take a lighter and a gasoline-soaked rag away from him. It was subsequently discovered that the downstairs apartment—where an 85-year-old man and his disabled 83-year-old wife lived—had been completely soaked with gasoline.

Mr. Speaker, the actions of these two police officers are a source of pride to the Long Branch community. While I'm sure that Cpl. Howard and Officer Ahart would object to being described as heroes, and would insist that they were just doing their jobs, their decisive action under severe pressure reminds all of us of the great contributions that police officers around our country make to our security, often at serious personal risk.

The Long Branch Exchange Club is part of a national organization of civic clubs devoted to allegiance to the flag and programs to benefit and educate children. They also stage festival events and other community programs throughout the year.

TRIBUTE TO ANNIE SMITH OF CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a citizen of this country who represents the best of what America has been, is and can become.

Mrs. Annie Smith was born in Mississippi in 1906, moved to Arkansas with her family and ultimately settled in Chicago, Illinois.

God blessed her with the gift of creativity. She learned cosmetology and millinery, established her own shop and was an outstanding business woman for many years. She was a graduate of Madam C.J. Walker's Beauty College and was an Eastern Star.

Mrs. Smith was a member of the St. Luke's Baptist Church for many years before joining the Carey Tercentenary A.M.E. Church, until her death, under the leadership of Rev. K.K. Owens. She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph Smith and son Charles Gordon.

Best wishes are extended to her son, Mr. Eugene Ireland, and grandchildren, Charlotte Willis, Vernetia Johnson, Jeffrey Johnson, Kevin Johnson, Ann Hill, Rosalynn Hill and her other grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and other family members and friends.

TRIBUTE TO DENT MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Dent Middle School for being honored with the Palmetto's Finest award. This award is giving annually to four schools in my home State of South Carolina for excellence in an educational facility. It is sponsored by the Carolina First bank and the S.C. Association of School Administrators.

As a former high school history teacher, I congratulate them with heartfelt pride for the work that is being done at Dent Middle School. Under the leadership of principal Cheryl Washington, a personal friend, Dent was chosen based on factors including how they teach, what classes they offer and how well the school interacts with parents and the local community. Site visits are also made by the judges, who comprise a team of educators representing schools that have won the award previously. Schools may win this prestigious award only once.

Dent Middle School, located in the Midlands area of the Sixth Congress District, is a unique school that represents the diverse population of my district very well. Dent has not only an economically, but also racially, diverse student body of 1,200. Students come from affluent suburban areas, lower-income apartment communities and nearby Fort Jackson. Students also come from across Richland District 2 for a magnet program housed at Dent. The magnet program, The Learning Cooperative, offers a longer school day, smaller teacher to student ratios, and challenging subjects for approximately 240 students from across the school district.

Aside from the magnet program, Dent offers an after-school tutoring program, study sessions and help with homework for students who need extra assistance. They also offer a program called ALERTS who offer special challenges for academically talented students.

Aside from being chosen as one of the Palmetto's Finest, Dent Middle School is a finalist for the Blue Ribbon School award given by the U.S. Department of Education. The other schools in South Carolina chosen as Palmetto's Finest are Riverside High in Greenville County, Reidville Elementary in Spartanburg County and Shell Point Elementary in Beaufort County. All four of the Palmetto's Finest schools will be honored by Governor David Beasley and state Superintendent of Education Barbara Nielsen at a March 10 gala in Columbia.

Principal Washington says the awards bestowed on Dent aren't won easily and it takes the ''commitment of everyone here, the collaboration of everyone working together.'' It is obvious that Dent Middle School is indeed very committed to meeting the needs of an extremely diverse student body and has proficiently collaborated their efforts so that each student gets the educational attention they deserve. Mr. Speaker, I ask you to join with me in paying tribute to Dent Middle School, with congratulations to Ms. Cheryl Washington; two of the Palmetto State's Finest.

HONORING THE HOUSTON FOOD BANK ON ITS 15TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Houston Food Bank on 15 years of service to the community. The Food Bank will celebrate its anniversary with a gala birthday luncheon on March 12, 1998. In keeping with its tradition of seeking ever new ways to serve, funds raised at the luncheon will be used to expand delivery of fresh fruit and vegetables and provide nutrition education to thousands more needy families.

There is much to celebrate. Since it opened its doors in March 1982, the Houston Food Bank has steadily grown into the nation's fourth-largest food bank, serving 36 counties in southeast Texas and feeding 200,000 people each month.

When it began, the Houston Food Bank consisted of volunteers picking up food in a psychedelic Volkswagen bus and icing it down in picnic baskets. Today, the Food Bank operates from a 73,000-square-foot warehouse featuring 160,000 cubic feet of freezer and refrigerated space. It operates three bobtail trucks, two tractors, and eight trailers for pick-up of donated food provided through a partnership with 300 food companies.

Since its inception, the Food Bank has provided 160 million pounds of food to people in need. Last year alone, the Food Bank provided 20 million pounds of food and other essentials to 400 member charities, including food pantry programs, shelters for the homeless, nutrition programs for the elderly, and group foster homes.

These accomplishments are reason enough to celebrate, but the Houston Food Bank recently received more good news when it was honored with the Congressional Hunger Center's 1997 ''Victory Against Hunger Award.'' The Center praised the Food Bank as ''a national model for innovation and efficiency in feeding the hungry,'' specifically citing programs that ''engage all facets of the community in the fight against hunger.

This is but one of many well-deserved honors the Houston Food Bank has received. In 1984, the Houston Food Bank became a certified member of Second Harvest, a network association of 185 food banks across the

United States. The Food Bank's honors include Second Harvest's Food Bank Award for Excellence in 1990, the Nabisco Model Food Bank Award in 1993, and the Hunger's Hope Award for Innovation in 1996.

The Houston Food Bank's fresh produce operation, the Produce People Care Center, serves as a model food bank program nationally, handling six million pounds of nutritious fruits and vegetables each year. In another initiative that is being copied elsewhere, the Food Bank has formed a partnership with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice whereby Texas prison inmates are growing millions of pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables on surplus prison farmland.

Perhaps the most important ingredient of all in the Houston Food Bank's success is community involvement. As a private, non-profit organization, the Food Bank depends on the support of concerned businesses, foundations, individuals, and the religious community for financial support to meet its annual budget. In addition, about 4,500 hours are donated by volunteers each month. Because of the strong support of the food industry and its low operating cost, the Food Bank is able to provide $20 in food for each dollar donated.

As the Houston Food Bank celebrates its 15th anniversary, it will honor two visionary couples who put a roof over the Food Bank's head and a foundation under its dreams. When the Food Bank was just an idea, philanthropists Joan and Stanford Alexander of Weingarten Realty Investors stepped forward with an offer of donated warehouse space, which gave the Food Bank both a home and credibility in the community. Then, in 1988, the late Albert and Ethel Herzstein donated the Food Bank's permanent home, the 70,000-foot-warehouse that is in use today.

Joan and Stanford Alexander's support of the Houston Food Bank from the beginning gave the organization public credibility when it needed it most. They have been valuable members of the Food Bank's Advisory Board, offered wise counsel, and advocated on behalf of the Food Bank. The Alexander's support of the Food Bank is just one expression of their concern for the disadvantaged and suffering, which has also led to their involvement with Crisis Intervention, SEARCH, and Interfaith Ministries of Greater Houston among many other organizations. Their help in the Food Bank's beginning stages is truly commendable and their continuing commitment has made it possible for the Houston Food Bank to fulfill the potential they foresaw.

The Food Bank lost one of its truest friends when Albert Herzstein passed away in March 1997. The son of Russian emigres, Albert Herzstein rose from truck driver and delivery boy to president of Big Three Industries. After his retirement, Mr. Herzstein began to build and lease warehouses. Through the Albert and Ethel Herzstein Charitable Foundation set up by him and his late wife, Mr. Herzstein helped local charities, including the Houston Food Bank, that provide food, shelter, and education, focusing on the construction of buildings to house their work. His gift to purchase the Food Bank's current facility ended its four-and-a-half year quest for a permanent home and made possible a phenomenal growth in the numbers of people fed. Every can and box of food that moves through the Herzstein Center is a tribute to this generous couple.

As the Houston Food Bank celebrates its fifteenth anniversary, its dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters are looking as much to the future as to the past. In the words of Board President Jerome Pesek, ''As we blow out the candles on the cake, our wish is still for a city without hunger.'' Mr. Speaker, I join the Houston Food Bank in rededicating our community to this goal, and I congratulate all involved for making so much progress toward achieving it.

MANAGED CARE CONSUMER PROTECTIONS: WHY COSTS WILL BE LIMITED

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 4, 1998

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the opponents of managed care consumer protections constantly say that the cost of the reforms will substantially drive up costs, and therefore cause employers to drop insurance coverage for their workers.

Some of their cost estimates are laughable. Remember the old Western, ''Have Gun, Will Travel?'' There is a whole industry in Washington of Ph'Ds who serve the same bounty hunter role. ''Have Ph'D; Will Produce the Study Results YOU Want.'' Or as the old vaudeville joke goes, ''If the man wants a green suit, turn on the green light.''

One reason the studies are silly is that the States are already requiring, for the roughly 50% of plans that they can regulate, that managed care plans comply with the type of reforms we are proposing. Another reason is that the managed care trade association, AAHP, already requires as a condition of membership that a plan comply with many of these standards. The question arises, why should there be much extra cost if the plans are already complying with their trade association's quality standards?

Using data from Blue Cross Blue Shield, my staff has compiled the following matrix of State actions. Clearly, the passage of Federal legislation will not be asking the managed care plans to deal with issues they are not already dealing with on a wide scale.

STATE CONSUMER PROTECTION LAWS

Attached is a preliminary summary of States' consumer protection laws. This information, taken from the Blue Cross/Blue Shield Association's 1997 Survey of Health Plans, indicates that all but four states have enacted at least one of the managed care quality protections listed in the President's Consumer Bill of Rights. In addition:

Thirty-nine (39) states have enacted laws prohibiting ''gag clauses'' in provider contracts.

Twenty-nine (29) states have enacted laws allowing direct access to specialists without prior approval from the plan's primary care physician. These laws apply primarily to OB–GYN's, but a few also refer to chiropractors, dermatologists, and other specialists. Another five (5) states are expected to propose direct access to specialists in 1998.

Twenty-six (26) states have enacted laws requiring payment for certain care delivered in an emergency room. Almost half (12) of these states also impose a ''prudent layperson'' standard. Another nine (9) states are expected to introduce legislation with the ''prudent layperson'' standard in 1998.

Twelve (12) states have external grievance review laws that require health plans to allow enrollees to appeal coverage or claims denials to an outside medical expert of panel, if dissatisfied with the outcome of the plan's internal appeals process. Another 12 states are expected to enact mandatory external grievance review laws in 1998.

Sixteen (16) states (CA, DE, FL, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KY, MD, ND, OK, PA, SC, TN, and WA) are expected to propose a framework of quality standards for managed care plans in 1998.

STATES' CONSUMER PROTECTION LAWS (AS OF 1997)

State	Info disclosure	Choice of plans and providers*	Access to ER services[1]	Prohibition on gag clauses	Respect and nondiscrimination#	Confidentiality	Complaints appeals**
Alabama		X					
Alaska							
Arizona	X		X	X			X
Arkansas		X	X				
California	X	X*	X	X			X
Colorado		X*	X	X			
Connecticut		X	X	X			X
Delaware		X	X^	X			X**
District of Columbia			X^	X			X**
Florida	X	X	X	X			X
Georgia		X	X	X			X**
Hawaii							X**
Idaho	X	X	X	X			
Illinois		X	X^				
Indiana		X	X^	X			
Iowa							
Kansas		X	X	X			
Kentucky		X	X^				
Louisiana		X	X	X			
Maine		X		X			
Maryland		X	X	X			X**
Massachusetts		X		X			
Michigan			X	X			
Minnesota		X		X			
Mississippi		X	X^				X**