

EXTENDING THE VISA WAIVER  
PILOT PROGRAM

SPEECH OF

**HON. DANNY K. DAVIS**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 25, 1998*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2578) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend the visa waiver pilot program, and to provide for the collection of data with respect to the number of nonimmigrants who remain in the United States after the expiration of the period of stay authorized by the Attorney General:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of HR 2578, a bill to extend the visa waiver pilot program till the year 2000. The current law is a good measure and is expected to red line this April 30, 1998.

I think it is important to allow tourists and business travelers from many Western European countries as well as Australia and Japan to come here for business and for pleasure. It boosts the economy and it allows people to see our great country first-hand. However, I also believe that the visa waiver pilot program should be extended to other countries, such as; Greece, Portugal, and South Korea. Thus, I support the Pombo-Frank-Kennedy-Pappas amendment.

Furthermore, this amendment supports an increase in the visa refusal rate from 2% to 3% in order to support other countries taking part in the tourist visa waiver program. However, I would like to mention that the refusal rate process is in need of new measures in deciding who receives a visa waiver.

I cannot tell you how many letters I write every single day to U.S. Embassies abroad, asking them to reconsider their visa denials of my constituents. In many cases, there is no solid basis for the denial, rather it is a class issue. They want to make sure that those individuals traveling abroad are leaving behind property, bank accounts, jobs, etc. If not, often times their visas are denied. Are these people not coming here to visit family and friends? Are these people not going to visit our country and spend money—will this not boost the economy? We cannot deny visas to those individuals wanting to come to this country at face value. What substantive basis does this derive from?

Mr. Speaker, for the aforementioned reasons, I rise in support of the bill coupled with the Pombo-Frank-Kennedy-Pappas Amendment.

## RECOGNIZING PAUL SAUERLAND

**HON. MICHAEL PAPPAS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 1998*

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, March 27, 1998 the Hunterdon County YMCA will recognize Paul C. Sauerland, Jr. as its Man of the Year with its 1998 Lend-A-Hand-to-Youth-Award.

Paul's longtime and wide ranging service to the community, county and state have earned him this well deserved recognition.

Since 1991, Paul has served as a Freeholder in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. His service to the county though began a long time before his first election to the Freeholder Board. He has been actively involved in numerous county boards, councils, and committees ranging in issues from transportation, housing, planning, human services, to health care.

Beyond the service that Paul has given to his local and county government, he has also served his state and country through his service of over thirty years as a member of National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, Paul has also been dedicated to serving the youth of his area. Through the many roles and positions that he has held in the local chapters of the Boy and Girl Scouts, he has helped to educate the youth of his community and instill in them a sense of community service and awareness. He has given of his time and knowledge so that young people have a greater opportunity of learning the values and skills that are needed to succeed. The participants of these programs represent the future leaders of our communities, state and country. Paul should be commended for his valuable contribution to our future.

I would like to congratulate Paul on this award. His service to the community is one that we are able to share in.

IN HONOR OF THE STRONGSVILLE  
RECREATION AND SENIOR COM-  
PLEX**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 26, 1998*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the opening of the Strongsville Recreation and Senior Center, a state-of-the-art facility with something for everyone in Strongsville, Ohio.

After nearly a decade of planning and construction, the 157,000 square foot facility opening this month will provide a variety of health, fitness, leisure, and cultural activities to everyone in the community. The residents of Strongsville expressed their collective need for such a complex when they approved a one-half percent increase in the city income tax in 1993 to fund construction. Now, they no longer have to leave their community to participate in fitness classes, or senior programs.

The Complex promises to be a popular place for fitness enthusiasts who will enjoy the swimming pool, gymnasium, cardio-conditioning area and strength training center. Young people from the community can entertain themselves in the game area playing pool, air hockey and video games. Parents will appreciate the child care services offered. Seniors will gather for craft classes, socializing, and the wellness clinic. In short, the health and quality of life for everyone in Strongsville will improve greatly with the opening of this Complex.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in recognizing dedication of the residents of Strongsville to building largest Recreation and Senior Complex in Ohio, and in congratulating Strongsville mayor Walter Ehrnfelt and the city council for their contributions to improving the quality of life in their fine city.

RECREATION, SENIOR COMPLEX TO BENEFIT  
ENTIRE COMMUNITY

After nearly a decade of planning, discussions and actual construction, the new Strongsville Recreation and Senior Complex will open this month, providing the community with a state-of-the-art facility with 21st Century amenities for everyone who lives or works full time in the City of Strongsville.

The unique 157,000-square-foot facility, which is the largest of its kind in the State of Ohio, is dedicated to improving the quality of life in Strongsville by providing a wide variety of leisure and cultural activities, special events, facilities and services that encourage health, fitness, relaxation, enjoyment, cultural enrichment and learning, as well as providing opportunities for community involvement.

As Mayor Walter F. Ehrnfelt points out, the center is family-oriented and offers something for everyone.

"This recreation and senior complex is designed to satisfy the needs of seniors, of young people and of everyone else so that we can all enjoy a greater quality of life within the City of Strongsville," the mayor said, adding:

"We do not have to leave our home (community) for physical fitness classes, senior programs, health care services and even a food program. This facility covers the spectrum for all generations in Strongsville now and in the future."

Planning for the center actually started back in 1989 when a committee of various individuals in the community studied and identified the recreational needs of the city.

Committee members and city officials worked with numerous architects and engineering firms with extensive experience in building recreation centers and sports complexes to determine what was needed to make a great recreation/senior facility.

The project moved closer to reality in 1993 when the city's voters approved a one-half percent increase in the city income tax.

"City Council financed the complex out of the general fund with money generated from the additional income tax which was provided by businesses through jobs within the city," the mayor said.

"We now have the finest recreation/senior facility in the State of Ohio and perhaps in the country for a reasonable charge."

Membership packages are available at special rates for city residents and for anyone who works full time for a business located in the city.

Mayor Ehrnfelt said the city is asking for nominal membership fees to offset the cost of operating the facility, which is estimated at \$1.8 million per year.

In a letter of invitation to the community, the mayor said, "The completion of the new Strongsville Recreation and Senior Complex brings our residents a facility that compares to no other in the State of Ohio. This facility is another great step for Strongsville's future and continues in providing the very best for all citizens."

"Please take the time to visit and become a member and use the facility to the maximum to improve and maintain your health and quality of life. Remember to use the facility. . . . Just for the 'Fun of it.'"

## RECREATION CENTER

Central attraction in the recreation area is the Aquatics Center which features an eight-lane, 25-yard-long competition pool with three diving boards and a bleacher seating area for approximately 500 spectators.

Another highlight of the center is the activity pool with zero depth entry, a circular water slide and even a pirate's ship with a water cannon. The aquatics area also has steam and sauna rooms and an 18-person whirlpool.