Another irony was pointed out by Weiner. ''The money that they would raise would not go toward the implementation of the ESA, it would go toward the landowner incentives,'' she said. ''It would go right back to the corporate landowner. . . . It's not actually going to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help them enforce the act or implement the act or come up with recovery plans. It's going straight to the private landowners.''

If agreements between landowners and the federal government go away? The CRS report states succinctly that S. 1180 would ''probably not make citizen (law) suits available to enforce conservation agreements.'' The House bill expressly allows such citizen lawsuits.

Bill Snape, legal director of Defenders of Wildlife, doesn't expect any real movement on the Senate bill until after Easter recess. ''The huge, thousand pound gorilla on the back of this bill is that not one environmental group in the country supports it. Not one. . . . Until that occurs, it's unlikely that Republicans will want to reinforce their anti-environmental message, particularly the Senate Majority Leader (Trent Lott) as they head into the November elections.''

The machinations of Congress—it may be that Lott is really attempting to kill the Senate bill with his amendments while looking cozy to his corporate donors.

The House version of the Endangered Species Recovery Act, introduced by Rep. George Miller, now has 102 co-sponsors. According to Snape, it won't move until the Senate bill passes or dies.

There are three major differences between the House and Senate ESA bills:

The Miller bill gives landowners assurances that conservation agreements will stand, but requires landowners to post performance bonds to make certain they live up to the requirements of minimizing the impact on threatened or endangered species. The Senate bill has no such bonding provisions.

The Miller bill would improve habitat protection on federal lands, while the Senate bill creates more loopholes to ignore impacts that put endangered and threatened species at risk.

The Miller bill focuses directly on the recovery of species by setting up definite standards and procedures. The Senate bill, according to Snape, ''plays up service to recovery, but what they're really talking about is survival.''

However, not everyone is happy with the Miller bill.

In February, a letter from the presidents of 11 professional scientific societies specializing in plant and animal biology was sent to Congress and the Clinton administration. The letter condemns both House and Senate bills for allowing habitat destruction under conservation agreements.

The Miller bill may not have the unified support of the environmental and conservation communities, but it clearly does more for the recovery of endangered species.

Don't expect either bill to pass during this session of Congress. Neither one will. These two bills, however, have defined the terms of discourse regarding endangered species.

And this critical environmental issue will undoubtedly be a part of the public debate during election campaigns. It will have an influence on the outcome of some congressional races in the West.

THE PREBLE's MEADOW JUMPING MOUSE ON COLORADO's FRONT RANGE

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, the Secretary of Interior, through the Fish and Wildlife Service, will soon make an important decision concerning whether to list the Preble's meadow jumping mouse as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. This decision comes at a troubling time for the people of the State of Colorado. A decision to list this species would have profound impacts on Colorado's thriving front range.

Colorado has taken steps to preserve our Western heritage and quality of life. Coloradans care about their environment. Those that depend upon the land and its resources have a vital link to their environment. If they do not manage their resources responsibly, they do not survive. Today, family-owned farms and ranches are at risk. According to some sporadic studies by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the habitat for the Preble's meadow jumping mouse is also at risk.

Colorado has aggressively dealt with the issues of growth and suburban sprawl along the front range. Land use planning, and growth issues are effectively being dealt with at the local and state levels. So too, is Colorado dealing with the issue of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

Colorado's General Assembly is considering a state law that would establish a trust fund to conserve species before their status becomes critical enough to justify listing under the Endangered Species Act. That bill has already passed the Agriculture Committee and is currently being considered for appropriations. In addition, Colorado has established a broad-based coalition of land owners, state and local government officials and conservationists to protect the mouse and its habitat. Colorado's approach to species preservation provides as much, if not more protection, than other successful programs applied across the country.

In light of existing and developing efforts to protect the species, the need to solicit additional data, and the profound impacts that listing would have on Colorado's front range, the Secretary of the Interior of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should allow the State to fully develop their state and local plans to preserve Colorado's quality of life, and the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.

HEALTH INSURANCE TAX DEDUCTIBILITY ACT OF 1998

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Speaker, today I introduced the Health Insurance Tax Deductibility Act of 1998. This bill is a simple, common sense solution to a very complex and destructive problem in our society.

Since I came to Congress in 1992, we have debated health care reform and considered a wide range of proposals—all designed to insure a greater number of Americans. When President Clinton signed the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) into law in 1996, everyone said Congress had taken the first step towards ensuring access to health insurance to more individuals and families.

Unfortunately, a recent study by the General Accounting Office shows us this goal has not been achieved. Although HIPAA did expand access to health insurance, it did nothing to ensure that Americans can afford health insurance. And as the GAO study recognized, affordability has become the major hurdle for the American family to clear.

In the past, Congress has passed initiatives to encouraged and assist people to get health insurance. We allow employers who sponsor health insurance for their employees to deduct the employer's share of the premium as a business expense. We allow self employed people to deduct a percentage of the health insurance premium they purchase. Yet we provide no assistance or incentive for individuals whose employers do not provide health insurance.

The Health Insurance Tax Deductibility Act of 1998 will do just this. Under this legislation, individuals will be able to deduct a portion—linked to the deduction for the self insured—they pay for health and long-term care insurance. This proposal will make health insurance more affordable for individuals and their families, which in turn, will give American families greater piece of mind.

IN MEMORY OF U.S. CAPITOL POLICE OFFICER THOMAS ROBINSON

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the finest Capitol Police officers we have known, Officer T.O. ''Tommy'' Robinson, whose life was tragically taken by cancer on March 23.

While Officer Robinson was a dedicated law enforcement officer and public servant, his life was a testimony to others as well. He will be deeply missed by all who had the great privilege of knowing him.

Tommy Robinson served his country in the U.S. Army from 1965 to 1968, and served honorably as a member of the Capitol Police for 27 years. He leaves behind his wife of 20 years, Denise, as well as their 12-year-old son Christopher. He was a man of steadfast faith, which he lived out on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD a copy of the eulogy given by our Capitol Police Chief Gary Abrecht in memory of Tommy Robinson, which pays tribute to his life and testimony. Everyone who came in contact with Officer Tommy Robinson is a better person for having done so. I know that the entire House joins me in expressing our deepest sympathies and prayers for Denise and Christopher.

I submit the following article.

IN MEMORY, OFFICER T.O. ''TOMMY'' ROBINSON

As I consider all the men and women of the US Capitol Police, I'm struck by the particular strengths each individual brings to the

job. Some are outstanding in their enforcement of laws; some, in their interviewing and interrogation of criminal suspects; still others in their expertise in utilizing a specific technique or method in the performance of their duties. While Officer Robinson was a dedicated law enforcement practitioner, his particular skill, and one critical to a successful career in policing, was his memorable and exceptional ability to interact positively with others.

As difficult as this is to achieve in life, Officer Robinson seemed to have no enemies. Whenever his name is mentioned, people consistently use phrases such as ''courteous, friendly, helpful, professional, and genuine.'' Officer Robinson's impact on the lives of his co-workers and others he came into contact with is truly remarkable. He truly epitomized the underlying ideals of law enforcement by his dedication and cooperative spirit, and not only will his pleasant demeanor be missed, but so also will his positive influence on others.

Officer Robinson's twenty-seven year career with the US Capitol Police included many different assignments. Most of his service was divided between the Capitol Division, FRU, and the House Division, where he leaves behind a host of friends and co-workers. Officer Robinson was an original member of the First Responder Unit of the Capitol Division, and stories abound of his selflessness and enthusiastic attitude. The First Responder Unit carries out their duties while confronting the harshest weather this area offers. Officer Robinson worked in these conditions as a member of the FRU for ten (10) years, and all reports indicate that he did so without complaint. In fact, Officer Robinson was an example to others in his dedication to duty, and strict adherence to the policies and directives of his unit.

Some thirteen years of Officer Robinson's career were spent with the House Division. Officer Robinson, consistent with his actions wherever he worked, endeared himself to his House Division co-workers and the staff and visitors, ensuring he will be missed, but not forgotten.

One of the most well-known facts about Officer Robinson was that he was a man of faith. His belief in GOD, and Jesus Christ as Lord, overshadowed every aspect of his being, and he made no secret of this important matter to all who knew him. He was quick to point to this belief as the reason that he carried himself as he did, with compassion, understanding and forgiveness. He often remarked to others how he wished more people on the Department shared a belief in GOD, and how he felt this would resolve some of the issues that divided not only his co-workers, but humanity in general. As an example of faith-in-action, Officer Robinson established a monthly prayer breakfast for benefit of his co-workers and friends. Meeting every first Wednesday of the month at 0600 hours, these meetings were well-attended by a wide cross-section of ranks from within the Department, and eventually interested parties form outside the agency attended to participate in prayer, reading of Scripture, and occasionally even song. Officer Robinson ensured that all attendees were welcomed openly, and had an opportunity to express themselves freely. Even when Officer Robinson fell ill, he often encouraged others to maintain their attendance at these meetings, feeling, and stating, that his absence should not be a reason for the discontinuation of the meetings, or the failure of others to attend. After each of these Wednesday morning meetings, Officer Robinson could be seen making his way to groups of officers who had not attended the meeting, offering them the ''goodies'' that had been brought to the breakfast by himself and the other attendees. This vision of Officer Robinson, walking up to groups of his friends and offering food and a certain word of good-will is one that many of us will reflect on with fondness in the coming days.

Officer Robinson was never swayed in his projection to us all of a peace that passes understanding. In the midst of confronting his illness, Officer Robinson was always upbeat and positive, rarely making reference to his ailment, and never complaining about it. He was truly remarkable in his ability to make whoever he was talking to feel better, even if that person was attempting to encourage Officer Robinson.

Because of his illness, Officer Robinson was unable to work for several weeks during the past months. Whenever he was contacted at home, he invariably spoke of his return to duty, often apologizing to his supervisors for not being at work. After his most lengthy absence, one of the first things Officer Robinson did was to request an opportunity to address his co-workers at roll call. This request was quickly granted, and in his comments to his co-workers, Officer Robinson not only thanked everyone for their prayerful support of him, but insisted that everyone should ensure that they maintained an adequate balance of sick leave, because you never know when you may need it. This type of comment most often comes from supervisors, and is often met with varying degrees of belief or acceptance, but when it came from Officer Robinson, it was received with interest and respect, for this is the type of response that Officer Robinson's character demanded and generated.

As a further testimony to Officer Robinson's character, soon after he had addressed his co-workers at roll call, he approached his supervisors with a suggestion that typified his selfless nature. With great humility, he asked if he might be allowed to provide a meal for the co-workers he so appreciated. With a great amount of awe, his request was granted and soon afterwards, Officer Robinson enlisted the services of a friend who catered the lunch-time meal for the entire day-work section of the House Division. Not a small undertaking, Officer Robinson ensured that all of the approximately 66 individuals present for an average workday were invited to the meal, and were able to enjoy not only his company, but a superb meal as well. This generosity is unheard of, and many officers remarked how humbled they were by Officer Robinson's act of charity and kindness.

Officer Robinson's friends and co-workers will remember him for these acts of generosity and compassion. His humble nature and patient endurance serve as an example to us all of how to face life and difficult circumstances with grace, courage, and thoughtfulness. He will be missed not only for his pleasant demeanor and positive attitude, but for the tremendous influence for good that his mere presence infused into the lives of everyone. One officer has remarked recently that Officer Robinson was too good for this world. Perhaps we can all learn from Officer Robinson how to live lives that honor those around us. His legacy to the men and women of the Capitol Police calls us to righteousness and servanthood, hallmarks of not only a good police officer, but of a good human being.

INTRODUCTION OF THE EMPLOYEE PENSION PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing extremely important legislation that will benefit working Americans. The focus of this legislation is pensions. Pensions are an integral part of retirement. Retirement can be compared to a three legged stool and the three legs are savings, pensions, and Social Security.

We are beginning to face what has been commonly referred to as the ''graying of America.'' Within thirty years, one our of every five Americans will be over age sixty-five. In thirteen years, the baby boomers will begin turning sixty-five. The baby boomer generation consists of 76 million members and will result in the number of Social Security beneficiaries doubling by the year 2040.

In the near future, we need to address Social Security, but in the immediate future Congress should take action to improve our current pension system. Last Congress, Congressman THOMAS and I worked on ''Super IRA'' legislation and many of these proposals were included in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. Expanding individual retirement accounts (IRAs) will help many save for their retirement.

The Taxpayers Relief Act of 1997 created the Roth IRA which has made IRAs more available to millions of taxpayers. The response has been overwhelming. The Taxpayer Relief Act has jump-started IRAs and we need to do the same for pensions.

Forty percent of retirement income comes from Social Security. Nineteen percent comes from pensions and the rest comes from individual savings. We need a more balanced approach. Pensions should provide for more than 19 percent of savings. We need to make individuals more responsible for their retirement.

Our society has changed and this includes the workplace. It is now more common for individuals to change jobs than to stay with one firm for an entire career. This makes it extremely important for us to address pensions and especially the issue of portability. Changing jobs should not drastically affect one's pension.

Millions of Americans have no pension access to retirement plans. Only half of full-time, private sector workers participate in an employer-sponsored pension plan. This results in 51 million American workers who have no pension plan. Pension coverage has only increased to 50 percent in 1993 from 48 percent in 1983.

Small businesses are less likely to have pensions than large businesses. While only thirty percent of firms that employ between 25 and 49 employees have pensions, seventy-three percent of firms that employ over 100 employees have pensions. Only 85 percent of Americans making below $10,000 a year have pension coverage. Fewer women receive pensions than men.

The percentage of the workforce covered by a pension has stagnated in the last 20 years. Many firms cite complexity and start-up costs as major reasons for not offering pensions.