

apparently thought so; they protected it as the essential flame of democracy.

Try telling Robert E. Joiner one vote cannot make a difference. Less than twenty years ago he ran for the office of Southern District Highway Commissioner in Mississippi and won—by less than one ten-thousandth percent of the votes. Had his opponent garnered just six more votes, Joiner would have lost the election.

Just last April, Eugene Shoemaker won the seat of Orfordville, Illinois, village trustee by drawing from a hat. He and his opponent each earned one hundred popular votes. Had just one more villager voted, the election would have been decided by the people. As it was, the outcome was left completely to the fingers of chance.

The vote of each American counts toward the election of local, state, and national leaders. Its effectiveness is directly proportionate to the frequency of its use. My voice, and the voice of every American, does not, however, die in the ballot box.

Boycotts, like those instigated by the legendary Rosa Parks bus incident in Montgomery, Alabama, and citizens organizations, like those founded by the consumer advocate Ralph Nader, wield profound influence.

Demonstrations spotlight the views in the sight of the public. On generating social reform, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed this, "In order to clean house the one thing we need is a good broom. Initiatives and referendums are good brooms."

My voice, and the voice of every American, is carried on the wings of peaceable assembly and petition; it influences those around me and even trumpets itself through my everyday actions.

The worth of my voice, because of its power and effectiveness, is incalculable. To not exercise it is a foolish waste. Because our democracy provides many practical vehicles for my voice, and because our country's future truly depends on it, it is my duty to articulate it. Otherwise, I scorn the pragmatic provisions of our democracy; I become a parasite living off the nation's privileges without positive contribution to the nation; I toss aside my right to cry for change in society. Or as Edmund Burke put it, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing." But when I vote, petition, write, speak, or act for the benefit of the nation I am, to the utmost, fulfilling my patriotic duty.

To the cynic, my voice may be merely the frail peeping of one person among two-hundred-sixty million, but to Robert E. Joiner, Eugene Shoemaker, Rosa Parks, Ralph Nader, and to me it is the soaring shout of freedom. My voice is the very essence of our democracy. Multiplied several million times, my voice is the throbbing heart of America.

OUR LADY OF LOURDES ACADEMY
IN MIAMI, FL

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to an outstanding group of girls from Our Lady of Lourdes Academy who won second place at this year's national We the People competition.

These dedicated, remarkable girls spent countless of hours studying diligently to win the local and state tournament. Proudly representing the state of Florida this year in our national competition, these devoted 17 girls

made evident their pride in our county's heritage and demonstrated their vast knowledge of U.S. history and of current events.

Great statesman Edward Everett mentioned that "Education is a better safeguard of liberty than a standing army." Mr. Speaker, education is indeed, a safeguard of liberty. Through education we are made free. These 17 girls have embodied the definition of liberty as they have edified on what our wondrous democratic nation has to offer. These students have learned to cherish the rights found in our constitution—the rights our founding fathers died for and for this I commend them today.

For winning second place this year, for the long nights and weekends spent in intense study and for the honor which they so greatly deserve, I ask my Congressional colleagues to join me today in congratulating the teacher Rosalee Heffernan and these high caliber students: Nina Bassil, Claudia Capriles, Alejandra Chamorro, Ana Del Cerro, Claudia Ferrer, Jennifer Garcia, Mariah Gidel, Miriann Guazzini, Annie Heffernan, Lauren Knickerbocker, Genevieve Koch, Monica Leal, Sabrina Munnings, Maria Ortega, Kristina Perez, Talia Romero, and Melissa Zurini.

A HISTORIC VOTE FOR PEACE

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Ms. MCCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, today the people throughout Ireland will make a historic vote for peace and progress. I would like to commend all of the leaders who have worked assiduously to reach this agreement to establish a political framework to reunite the people of Ireland.

For lasting peace to take hold in Northern Ireland, economic stability and growth must be achieved. The Republic of Ireland is often referred to as the "Celtic Tiger" because of the strides that its citizens have made in building their economy and in attracting foreign investment capital. The same pattern of growth and development as occurred in the Republic now needs to take hold in the North of Ireland.

Secretary of Commerce Richard Daley will lead a trade mission this June to promote economic development and private investment by U.S. firms. I support this initiative because long term stability is directly linked to economic prosperity. History has shown that the key to resolving longstanding tension is through economic expansion.

Mr. Speaker, today the people of Ireland are making a choice on whether they wish to move forward or return to the violence and the bloodshed of the past. This vote is an important step in the journey toward peace and trust. I commend the U.S. and foreign leaders who will make peace a reality by their work to encourage investment and growth in Northern Ireland.

JENNIFER'S LAW ACT OF 1997

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the brave efforts and profound hope

of my constituents JoAnn and Carl Rock in the search of their missing son, Robert, and to urge support for the Jennifer's Law Act of 1997. H.R. 2850, which was introduced by my distinguished colleagues, Congressman JAY JOHNSON, Congressman NICK LAMPSON, and myself.

I urge my colleagues to help all parents who may be seeking to locate a missing daughter or son. Jennifer's Law is necessary to bring relief to families that face endless nights of not knowing where a loved one may be and what has happened to them. This legislation is a simple way of closing a terrible loophole with painful and needless consequences.

Mr. Speaker, Jennifer's Law will bring peace and relief to thousands of American families whose sons and daughters have disappeared and remain missing. Each year, thousands of unidentified bodies are buried in the United States. While law enforcement officials are required to report unidentified bodies, they are not required to use the already established national repository for information that may have criminal investigation importance, the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) of the Federal Bureau of Investigations.

In New York City alone, Mr. Speaker, over 4,000 unidentified persons are buried each year in mass graves in Potter's Field without NCIC references. The circumstances of this oversight are stark and real; thousands of unidentified bodies may be identified and long-awaited closure brought to their families across the United States through the usage of the NCIC.

Many of these unidentified persons who are found dead or murdered were only children when they disappeared from their families. Those children may be alive or dead anywhere in this country. Federal legislation must be enacted swiftly in order to address the nature of this terrible situation.

Mr. Speaker, in my home state of California, for instance, law enforcement officials are required to report unidentified bodies to the NCIC, but that is not enough for parents like Carl and JoAnn Rock because their son could be alive or dead in another state, even as far away as New York City's Potter's Field. Their tragic story demonstrates the need for comprehensive action, not a piece-meal solution.

Last fall, JoAnn Rock and other families who have also lost their children came to ask the help of their Representatives as part of a group called Finding Our Children Under Stress (FOCUS). Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that they made their trip in vain.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support Jennifer's Law. It costs nothing but it gives in return the priceless gift of human compassion. This bill is a clear, obvious way to remedy a confusing and terrifying situation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share with my colleagues the experience of the Rock family in their own words. It is my hope that this story will inspire each of you to act upon their behalf and the behalf of thousands of families still searching for their missing loved ones.

I cannot begin to put into words my feelings, profound sadness and sense of loss as a result of the disappearance of our son, Robert. Bob was our son, our daughter Kristin's brother, a grandson, nephew, cousin and friend. All the people who know and love Rob have had their lives changed forever. Almost three years have passed with not a single piece of information about Rob's whereabouts. As a Magna Cum Laude graduate of

NYU he had wonderful plans and a promising future. Stricken with schizophrenia in 1995, his life literally fell apart. A bout of hospitalizations, medications and depression left him and his family confused and anguished.

On May 3, 1995 Rob left his home to get lunch downtown. He has never been seen or heard from since. We live in a suspended state, fearing the worst, dealing with false leads and dashed hopes, facing each day asking "where is our son?"

When we reported to the Millbrae Police Department that Rob was missing, they were wonderful. Without hesitation they entered him into the NCIC (National Crime Information Center) system. Chief Parker has seen that the investigation goes on with special thanks to Officers Michael Grogan and Robb Lowe. "3 Children" of San Bruno, CA and Child Quest Int'l of San Jose were two agencies that reached out to help with a missing adult. There is no doubt that because of Rob's disappearance our level of awareness of the horrifying number of children and adults who are missing each year has changed dramatically. A child is reported missing every 40 seconds in this country. We don't even have statistics on missing adults.

Rob was 26 and an at-risk adult because of being afflicted with schizophrenia. He is so bright and talented but this disease has robbed him of his ability to deal rationally with the world. He feels himself to be responsible for every "evil" thing that happens on earth. Can you imagine having to face each day knowing you caused the Oklahoma bombing, the earthquake in Osaka, the war in Bosnia.

In his delusional state, Rob thinks his family is dead. We are very much alive and want to find our son. We found support and assistance immediately from other families of missing loved ones, and endless support from caring friends. Wanting to reach out to others I became involved as a founding member of a group called F.O.C.U.S. (Finding Our Children Under Stress). One of the first activities of our group came about when a horrifying bit of information surfaced related to one's search for a loved one. In this country we have a central repository of information available to law enforcement for listing missing and unidentified persons, the NCIC. Law enforcement must immediately list a missing child under the age of 18 into this system. Our population can easily move from state to state so this is so logical. However, states are not required to list adults nor are they required to report unidentified persons (alive or deceased) found in their jurisdiction, into this system. If our son died without any identification on him, has he been buried in a Potter's Field somewhere in this country, his identity forever lost? Mourning may never end, investigations may continue to go on, families grieve over cases that could be solved. As a result, under the encouragement of Congressman Lanto's office we have proposed federal legislation to rectify this, Jennifer's Law, HR 2850. In content simply—require states to report unidentified persons found in their jurisdiction into the NCIC in a prompt manner. Jennifer's Law would not only ease the suffering of families wanting to hear about missing loved ones, but could help solve other crimes as well. HR 2850 will ensure that no child or adult is buried as Jane or John Doe. It will assure that they keep their identities even into their deaths.

MANDATES INFORMATION ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 19, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3534) to improve congressional deliberation on proposed Federal private sector mandates, and for other purposes.

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H.R. 3534, the Mandates Information Act of 1998. This misguided legislation would create a road block for many environmental, worker health and safety, and consumer-protection legislation the House may consider in the future.

H.R. 3534 allows a point of order against any bill or amendment if its direct costs to the private sector—either by way of regulatory costs or taxes—exceed \$100 million.

The current unfunded mandates law—which I support and voted for in 1995—establishes a point of order against any bill that imposes net costs of more than \$50 million to state or local governments. This law is designed to prevent Washington from passing on the cost of new laws and regulations to the states and local governments.

The Mandates Information Act, however, is more broad and would restrict more legislation. Under this bill, for example, any legislation that increases taxes on gasoline, airports or tobacco—which would be used for highway funding, airport construction, or reducing teen smoking—would be subject to a point of order. This bill would jeopardize the hard-fought BESTEA highway program, which includes \$356 million more for my home state, and could stop the tobacco bill, which is being crafted with the intention of curbing teen smoking, from being considered when it reaches the floor.

Another problem with this legislation is that the implementation of the point of order provision is uneven and arbitrary. For example, if Congress decides to increase the tax on tobacco products in order to create new programs and incentives to stop children from smoking, the bill would be subject to a point of order. But, if Congress passes a tobacco tax, and decides to use the increased revenues to pay for a tax break for special interests, there would be no point of order. In both of these examples a mandate was imposed on the private sector, but in only one case is the point of order imposed.

I also find this bill unnecessary. The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act already requires the Congressional Budget Office to report the private sector costs of legislation to Congress. Additionally, an executive order exists which requires federal agencies to consider private sector costs when drafting and implementing regulations. Congress and the Administration is already addressing the need to consider mandates on the private sector.

Mr. Speaker, I support the objective of this legislation, which is to assure that Congress fully considers the mandates imposed on the private sector, but I disagree with the method this bill takes to achieve that goal. That bill creates an unnecessary obstacle for consider-

ing legislation and is implemented in an arbitrary way. I hope we can continue to work to assure that the cost of legislation on the private sector is considered, but urge my colleagues to reject this misguided bill.

TRIBUTE TO VICE ADMIRAL
GEORGE R. STERNER

HON. NORMAN SISISKY

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 22, 1998

Mr. SISISKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Vice Admiral George R. Sterner, United States Navy, as he retires upon completing 36 years of faithful service to our Nation.

During his distinguished career, Vice Admiral Sterner played a significant role in reshaping the way America develops, acquires, modernizes and maintains its ships, ordnance and systems so that our Sailors and Marines at the tip of the spear have the best in the world at an affordable price.

Vice Admiral Sterner's career began in 1962 upon his commissioning as an Ensign in the United States Navy. During the years that followed, he served aboard four submarines, U.S.S. *Tullibee* (SSN 597), U.S.S. *Kamehameha* (SSBN 642), U.S.S. *Archerfish* (SSN 678), and U.S.S. *Henry L. Stimson* (SSBN 655), and commanded two others, the attack submarine U.S.S. *Sturgeon* (SSN 637) and the ballistic missile submarine U.S.S. *Florida* (SSBN 728).

Among his shore assignments was duty on the staff of the Commander in Chief, United States Atlantic Fleet; as branch head for submarine tactical weapons on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations; Program Manager for Mark 48 Advance Capability Torpedo; and Program Executive Officer for Submarine Combat and Weapons Systems. He also served at Naval Sea Systems Command, first as Assistant Deputy Commander for Combat Systems Engineering and Technology and then as Vice Commander.

On April 25, 1994, Vice Admiral Sterner took charge of Naval Sea Systems Command, the largest of five Navy Systems Commands.

As Commander of Naval Sea Systems Command, his remarkable leadership re-focused and re-energized the organization, which, due to downsizing and restructuring, was experiencing a transformation of a magnitude and impact that had not been experienced since World War II. Carefully executing a budget of about \$14 billion annually and managing more than 180 acquisition programs, he has been an outstanding steward of taxpayer dollars, yet has also ensured we have the technically-superb, world-class ships, ordnance and systems needed to protect our national interests.

As testament to his dynamic leadership, the National Performance Review chose to honor him and his command with 27 Hammer Awards for contributions to create a government that works better and costs less.

Closer to home, Vice Admiral Sterner has been a good friend to the men and women of Virginia who make their livelihood at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Thanks in part to his insightful planning, the Shipyard will retain its important military-industrial capabilities and continue to provide jobs for decades to come.