

Unfortunately, the 200-year old town hall was destroyed in a horrendous fire in December of 1995. The new Town Hall, which was dedicated on July 11, 1998, stands as a testament to the courage and character of the 2,300 residents of this wonderful town. I want to acknowledge this town and its residents as they celebrate their new Town Hall as well as their 215th anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO MR. PAT PATTON

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a gentleman who has endeared himself to the cause of equality and justice in Northern Ireland and distinguished himself as a community leader in Texas. Pat Patton has served in many capacities, both professionally and as a volunteer, for his community. As the Executive Director of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians, he worked diligently and effectively at seeking recognition of inequalities in Northern Ireland.

Before assuming that position, Mr. Patton played an instrumental role in the Irish community throughout Texas. He produced and hosted a weekly radio show in Houston called "Irish Aires." In 1991, I had the privilege of working with Mr. Patton as he spearheaded the lobbying effort to pass the MacBride Principles in the Texas Legislature. His tireless efforts over a period of two legislative sessions ultimately succeeded. To this day, this law dictates principles of fairness and equality within companies in Northern Ireland in which the State of Texas owns shares. For these and other efforts, Mr. Patton, on July 21, will be honored at the National Convention of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians in Pittsburgh, PA.

By profession, Mr. Patton is a social worker, having completed his undergraduate degree from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, which is my alma mater. As a social worker myself, I am aware of the sacrifices and patience required in this profession. After receiving his Masters of Social Work (MSW) from Tulane University in New Orleans, he provided counseling for the US Air Force. He continued his services at Catholic Charities in Los Angeles where he served as a therapist and family marriage counselor. Later, he moved back to Texas where he continued serving those less fortunate as Vice President of Houston Lighthouse for the Blind.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the selfless devotion of Mr. Patton to his community and his country. We owe him, his wife Mary, and their family, our debt of gratitude.

THE SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYEE
RETIREMENT PROTECTION ACT
OF 1998

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Small Business Employee Re-

tirement Protection Act of 1998. This legislation will bring security to millions of small business employees in Connecticut and throughout the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I wrote this legislation in part because of a problem in my district. Late last year, we in eastern Connecticut learned just how vulnerable pension plans are. The employees of Emergi-Lite, a small manufacturing business in Westbrook, Connecticut, were informed that their plan was basically bankrupt. An unscrupulous, unqualified manager embezzled about \$2 million—nearly all the assets in the plan. The employees had no idea their life savings were being squandered. They had no information about the total value of the plan or how the total value of the plan or how the assets were being invested. They were left in the dark and almost robbed blind.

The bill I introduce today will reduce the chances that what happened at Emergi-Lite will happen again. This legislation requires pensions to be managed by qualified professionals, such as a bank or mutual fund company. Moreover, it requires plan managers to provide beneficiaries with information about total asset value and how funds are invested. Passage of this bill will ensure that people working for small businesses will know where their hand-earned dollars are going. They deserve nothing less.

If enacted into law, the Small Business Employee Retirement Protection Act will ensure that this sort of tragic loss of retirement savings does not happen again by requiring that pension assets be held in a bank or other qualified financial institution. In addition, the bill would give employees the right to find out the status of their plan's assets and would require that plans inform participants of that right.

I am happy to introduce this legislation with my five colleagues from Connecticut: Ms. DELAURO, who also represents many of the affected employees, Mrs. KENNELLY, Mrs. JOHNSON, Mr. SHAYS, and Mr. MALONEY. All of us were disturbed about what happened in Westbrook. This is an example of how our delegation works together to support common-sense legislation that will really make a difference for people across our region.

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES EDWIN
SKIDMORE—"CHAMPION FOR
WEST VIRGINIA'S VETERANS"

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my deepest condolences to the family of Charles Edwin Skidmore of Hinton, West Virginia, who died on May 31, 1998 after a long battle with cancer.

I also rise in tribute to Charles Skidmore and his lifelong commitment to disabled Veterans.

Charles was the Commander of the Disabled Veterans in Hinton, West Virginia at his death, but had previously served two terms as State Commander of the West Virginia Disabled American Veterans, and was still active as a volunteer at the Beckley, West Virginia Veterans Hospital up until his death.

Even though Charles was very ill during the last year of his life, he still fulfilled all his commitments.

Charles Skidmore was vice president of the Southern West Virginia Veterans Museum, and served on the committee for the Restwood Veterans Memorial where he was instrumental in its design and completion.

A lifelong member of the American Legion Post #29 in Elkins, and a life member and local commander of the DAV in Hinton, Charles was also deeply involved in "Respect the Flag" program with local area schools.

A retired Postal worker for the Beckley Post Office, Mr. Skidmore was also a former railway clerk in Hinton, West Virginia where he was born and where he lived all of his life.

Charles Skidmore is survived by his wife Rosalyn, three sons and three daughters, 16 grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. I am confident that his wife, and his sons and daughters will carry on his commitments to local Veterans programs and to his community in the years to come.

Charles Skidmore will be sorely missed by Veterans at the Beckley VA Hospital, where they could count on his presence, where they could tell him of their problems and get his advice on how to solve them. Veterans in the Beckley-Hilton area knew they could always count on him to actively fight for their right to adequate and appropriate health care services at the local, State and National levels.

I last saw Charles at a dinner in May, shortly before he died, where we spoke briefly concerning veterans affairs, and where he introduced me to his wife, his daughter Sharon and his grandchildren. He was a proud husband, father and grandfather, who set a shining example of compassion and caring, trustworthiness, honesty and good citizenship for them and for his community.

Mr. Skidmore was buried with full military honors in the Restwood Memorial Gardens in Hinton, a place he helped design, build and dedicate as a fitting burial site for other Veterans.

CUTS IN SUMMER YOUTH
EMPLOYMENT FUNDING

HON. HAROLD E. FORD, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, Each of the last two years, Mr. Speaker, I have witnessed over 5,000 young people in my district stand in line for the chance to apply for a summer job. And unfortunately, each year, at least 3,000 of these young people have been turned away because of a lack of resources—despite \$2.8 million of federal funding per/year and local government and private sector support.

So instead of waking-up each morning for eight weeks out of the summer and being exposed to the rigors, habits, and rewards of work, thousands of young people in my district—mostly 15, 16, and 17 years olds—have had little more to do than hang-out on the streets looking for ways to keep themselves entertained and occupied.

So I rise today, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the thousands of young people in my district and countless others across America, to express my deep concern and frustration over the decision last week by the Labor/HHS Appropriations Subcommittee to report-out a bill that will, among other things, eliminate \$871

million in federal funding for summer youth employment programs.

How, I ask, do my colleagues on the other side of the aisle expect our young people to develop an appreciation of the value and importance of education and work, if all they see is Congress appropriating money to build more prison cells, but not to air condition schools or provide summer jobs?

Mr. Speaker, when, and if, anyone has an answer to my question, I, along with the thousands of young people in my district, would love to hear it.

A TRIBUTE TO THE BARBER FAMILY ON THE BARBER FAMILY REUNION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG AMERICAN FAMILIES

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute a strong American family from throughout our great nation which will be holding an especially loud and joyous reunion in Minneapolis from July 30th to August 2nd.

The Barber Family will be celebrating the "Power of Family." Nothing could be more right on target. I want to wish the Barber Family, and Barber Family Reunion State Chairperson Marion Barber, the very best for a most successful family gathering.

Mr. Speaker, I salute all American families for the miracles they perform every day. Together, America's families are what our nation is all about: The freedom to love, the freedom to work, the freedom from crime and hatred, the freedom to pursue our dreams.

If you want to gauge the value of family in America today, you should show up at the Barber Family Reunion, which has chosen as its reunion theme "Linking the Past, Present and the Future."

Mr. Speaker, as Congress considers actions in its day-to-day routine, I urge every member to keep families like the Barbers in mind.

As Marion Barber wrote in a letter to me, "Family and family ties are the most important elements that make up the core and fabric of the true American family. What the family does and the values it practices have a great impact on our society. Families need to stay together, pray together and help each other."

Mr. Speaker, it's families like the Barbers—staying together, looking out for each other, helping each other—that provide our great nation with its real strength. Our families know how to overcome challenges and difficulties—and survive and flourish.

The Barber Family's history is the story of our nation. Jim Barber, a slave, more than a century and a half ago, was brought down from Virginia to Georgia and sold to John Reynolds. There, he met Elizabeth Reynolds, another slave. They married and had seven children.

And in a few days, the descendants of Jim and Elizabeth Barber will be celebrating their blessings and their love for each other in Minneapolis. Their struggles have not divided them, just as our great nation's struggles have not divided America.

Mr. Speaker, the Barber Family represents the American Dream and today I wish all the

members of the Barber Family the very best. I thank them for doing their part to make America the greatest country on earth.

STATEMENT REGARDING
NORTHERN IRELAND

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 16, 1998

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that all Members of this House and Americans everywhere who long to see Northern Ireland enter a period of peace, social justice and economic reconstruction have viewed with great dismay events these past few days in Northern Ireland. What is particularly troublesome and in some ways painfully symbolic of the conflicts that continue to plague the people on that troubled piece of earth, was the murder over the weekend of three innocent young Catholic boys, Richard—11, Mark—10 and Jason Quinn—9, who were burned to death early Sunday morning by a fire bomb reportedly thrown by practitioners of the worst kind of religious bigotry and hatred.

Hopefully the tragic deaths of these three innocent boys will mark a watershed in the long and sad history of Northern Ireland's religious strife and men and women of good will who are committed to peace and reconciliation throughout Northern Ireland will work together to reinforce the fragile peace process underway in Northern Ireland. Those efforts should receive the strong endorsement and support from those of us in the United States who share that objective.

Mr. Speaker, a growing number of my constituents are taking a closer look and a keener interest in events in Northern Ireland and this process is assisted by such statements as the enclosed editorial *Trying to Get Beyond the Boyne* published in the July 12 *Providence Sunday Journal* which I request to be inserted in the RECORD at this point. In my view, this editorial contains thoughtful observations on a very difficult and complex situation and makes the significant point that Northern Ireland must move past the anachronisms of the past and into a more enlightened and reasoned future if the peace process is to survive and prosper and I am confident that it can and will.

I agree, too, with the editorial's observation that the President should move swiftly to name a successor to the recently departed Ambassador Jean Kennedy Smith and that my good friend Paul Quinn, who is well experienced in Irish-American affairs makes an excellent candidate for this assignment. Mr. Quinn enjoys wide-spread bi-partisan support from my colleagues in the Congress and from governmental, political and community business leaders throughout Ireland and those in the United States who share our commitment to a more peaceful and prosperous day on the island of Ireland. He has made substantial contributions to relations between the United States and the Republic of Ireland and the North for more than 35 years and I know he will continue to do so for many years to come whatever the President's decision is regarding the next Ambassador.

TRYING TO GET BEYOND BOYNE

William Trevor's *After Rain* is the tale of a boy—son and grandson of proud Unionists

in an Ulster village—who brings calumny upon himself by refusing to march. We are given to understand that the boy may be prey to a religious hallucination of some sort, that he must pay for his intransigence with his life, that his brother in the paramilitaries must properly have a hand in his killing. Thus does Mr. Trevor, the masterful Anglo-Irish short-story writer, draw us into the insanity of "the Troubles" in Northern Ireland.

The good burghers are pious and temperate Presbyterian townsmen who once a year don the bowler and the orange sash to commemorate their ancestors' defeat of the Catholic forces at the Battle of the Boyne.

The crazy person is the one who refuses to join in the Protestant marching to fife and drum through the Catholic neighborhoods—a ritualized rubbing of salt into the worlds of the subjugated people's descendants.

Thoughts of the fictional strife come to mind because today is the 308th anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, in which the Protestant monarch of England, William III, of the Dutch House of Orange, vanquished the Catholic King James II. In the all-too-real life of Northern Ireland this past week, the peaceful promise of the Good Friday accords has been imperiled by violence in the buildup to this climax of "marching season."

Orange Order Protestants tasted defeat this spring when Irish voters north and south—including a narrow majority of Protestants—endorsed the peace process at referendum and followed up last month by electing a veto-proof majority of peace-accord supporters to a new self-rule assembly.

A bitter pill for the hardliners is that the new first minister of Northern Ireland, chosen under a peace process he helped to create, is one of their own, David Trimble.

Trimble, head of the Protestant Ulster Unionists Party, built his base in the Orange Order but came to believe that growing numbers of his constituents and co-religionists had wearied of the conflict that has wasted three decades and more than 3,400 lives in the North. This marching season, having helped to forge the shaky peace, Mr. Trimble has stayed on the sidelines as the order demanded the right to march its traditional route from the town or Portadown, west of Belfast, to the Anglican church in Drumcree and back. Since the British government's decree that they shall not march through a Catholic neighborhood in Portadown, Orangemen have camped in a nearby pasture.

Incidents of violence and rioting have ensued in the British-ruled province in recent days, as Prime Minister Tony Blair, Mr. Trimble and other moderates have sought a peaceful way out of the impasse. Orange leaders have threaten a general strike that could, they assert, paralyze Northern Ireland. Well, perhaps not. Not if enough Protestant citizens boycott the strike.

The Clinton administration played an important role in getting all sides through the negotiations that produced the accord but has little policy role now except to cheer and pay as the peacemakers face their first tough test in the streets.

(In an indirect way, however, President Clinton could contribute modestly to the long-term prospects for Irish peace by swiftly naming a successor to the recently departed ambassador to Ireland, Jean Kennedy Smith. Paul Quinn, the Pawtucket-born Washington lobbyist, has the experience in Irish-American affairs to make him as good a candidate as any.)

The hope for peace in Northern Ireland is with a new generation that, like Mr. Trevor's fictional youth, resists its inherited duty of hatred. Let us hope that its quiet force—which has won two historic votes for the pace-seekers since Good Friday—will