

of a 200 page bill full of mandates and Federal interference, I proposed a two-page clarification of the ERISA preemption that would get the Federal government out of the way of states to address these problems. I told him that the problem was with ERISA preemption. I asked Chairman FAWELL if he could assure me that the bill does not do anything to strengthen or broaden the ERISA preemption.

Chairman FAWELL assured me that H.R. 4250, the Patient Protection Act, does not amend the ERISA preemption clause. Therefore, it makes it neither broader nor narrower. We have left this to the courts to continue to develop.

Seeking further clarification, I told Chairman FAWELL that I appreciated his putting language in the committee report at the request of members of the Texas delegation to ensure that the Patient Protection Act neither broadens nor changes the current scope of the ERISA preemption as it is being developed in the courts. Again, Chairman FAWELL assured me that was the case.

I explained to Chairman FAWELL that the United States Supreme Court, in the last three years in cases like *Travelers*, *Dillingham*, and *DeBuono*, have narrowed the previously broadly interpreted scope of the ERISA preemption and clarified that ERISA does not preempt traditional state law areas of regulation such as "quality standards in health care." Federal Circuit courts of appeal have likewise been holding more recently that ERISA does not and should not preempt patient quality of care cases against HMOs like the 3rd Circuit held in the *Dukes* case. Five different Federal judges in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, all Republican, have also held that quality of care cases are not preempted by ERISA. Again, Chairman FAWELL assured me it would not.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans in Texas last year passed state patient protection legislation that is more comprehensive than the Patient Protection Act. Such protections include the right to sue HMOs for affecting the quality of health care treatment decisions. Aetna has gone to court in Houston to assert that Texas legislation is preempted by ERISA. I am glad that Chairman FAWELL could assure me that the Patient Protection Act would not affect the decision of the court in that case.

RECOGNIZING THE SACRIFICE AND SERVICE OF THE FIREFIGHTERS FROM AROUND THE NATION TO THE STATE AND PEOPLE OF FLORIDA

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 1998

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, as co-chairman of the Congressional Fire Service Institute I rise today to echo the sentiments of many of my colleagues in expressing my thanks and appreciation for all the firefighters who have worked so hard in battling the wildland fires in Florida.

The magnitude of the fires and the destruction they have caused is almost incomprehensible. In the last two months more than 500,000 acres in 67 counties have been burned by 200 separate fires. At least 367 homes and more than 33 businesses have

been destroyed. Estimates are that it may take over 100 years for some of the burned acreage to return to normal. In short, Mr. Speaker, it has been a devastating disaster.

Thankfully, no lives have been lost. However, 95 people, mostly firefighters, have been injured. Many of the firefighters who are on the front lines are not even from Florida. Approximately 7000 first responders from 46 states have volunteered their time, effort and talent to help the people of Florida. From Maryland alone, over 200 firefighters left their homes and loved ones to battle fires that were threatening land they did not own and to protect people they have never met.

For anyone not familiar with the fire service it may sound amazing that firefighters from across the country would drop everything to help the people of Florida. However, it does not surprise me at all. In fire companies across the country firefighters do just that, day in and day out. They do not do it for money and they do not do it for fame. They do it because, Mr. Speaker, they are committed to bettering their community and serving their fellow citizens.

Mr. Speaker, in acknowledging their service, I would like to include in the RECORD a complete listing of all the Maryland firefighters who volunteered to battle the Florida wildfires.

Anne Arundel County: John Devine, William Evans, Tom Frankhow, David Owen; Baltimore County: Adam Bosely, Bob Bury, Andy Caladerge, Matt Fox, Charles Janney, Dawn Kaszek, Robert Lepin, William McCabe, Richard Muth, Randy Perky, Ron Sheldon, Claude Melcher; Calvert County: Ted Allen, Mike Cox, Joe Deltacame, John Gott, Gary Harrison, Rob Helms, Jean Miller, Seth Randelma, Rob Schultbur, Walter Taylor, Donnell Wallace, Kevin Whittington; Caroline County: Richard Baker, Steven Chaall, Donald Hill, Wayne Winchester, Heath Wroten; Carroll County: Robert Schoenber; Cecil County: Kevin Bell, Jim Bennett, Shawn Buckanian, Robert Caffrey, Adam Dommenic, Josh Eller, Mike Fifona, John Graham, Mike Lipka Jr., Mike Lipka Sr., Ron Miller, Aaron Neely, Tom Scott, John Smith, John Upp; Charles County: Tim Allen, Michael Carroll, Paul Donaldson, Trevor Forrester, Christi Grey, Brian Harrison, Jimmy Herbert, Wayne Higdon, Justin Hutchinson, Scott Hutchinson, Dick Irby, Jimmy Jackson, David Jenkins, Tom Jenkins, Tom Kellom, Chris Maddox, Tim Massey, Chris Mattingly, Brent O'Neil, Billy Pirner, Duane Rice Jr., Tony Rose, Billie Stevens, Chris Thompson; Dorchester County: Thomas Coghlan, Brad Dickerson; Frederick County: Paul Cullen, Claude Droneberg, Paul Hackey, Mike Hayter, Jeremy Hutton, Chris Scneel, Bradyn Thomas; Harford County: Chris Rach; Howard County: Jeff Hooasis, Tom Norman, Robert Freeman, David Moynihan, George Pearman; Kent County: Randy Barr, Matt Burge, Chris Carter, Bobby Helmer, Jimmy Kirby, Antonio Leonardi; Maryland Department of Natural Resources: Kenneth Jolly; MEMA: Warren Campbell; Montgomery County: Jeff Bennett, Mark Brown, Paul Brubaker, Jay Bureau, John Collins, Seth Condon, Tim Dowd, Wayne Drapean, Bill Dunn, Jack Ferguson, Sarah Fields, Pam Foltz, Robert Golian, Mark Hopkins, Ken Knopp, Larry Lease, Drew Lermond, Bill Lucas, Mike McAdam, William McLaghtin, Peggy Miller, Joseph Mills, Rick Morrisey, Jim Roy, Barry Smith, Rick Tatum, Justin Thorew, Gina Young; Prince George's County: Ernie

Alsop, Robert Bramhall, William Corrigan, Bill Edwards, Patrick Feehley, Shannon Foster, Scott Glazer, William Hinton, Abree Johnson, Gary Kirchbaum, Thomas Maddox, Angela Moore, Chris Ranson, Floyd Richerson, Larry Robey, Fred Sheckles, Jack Spencer, Ed Torrence, Michael Warhurst, Shannon Welch; Queen Anne County: Eric Arcane, Robbie Dixon, Sarah Holloman, Greg Johnston, Andy Robertson, David Steel; Somerset County: David Barnett, Brian Barnette, Grover Chatham, Chris Holland, Steve Mitchell, Scott Sturgis; St. Mary's County: Kevin Bannagan, Gerard Campbell, Andy Cather, Jim Foster, Boots Garner, George Gatton, Steve Gobson, Billy Hill, Bill Houle, Michael Huseman, Billy Long, C.J. Mattingly, George McKay, LeRoy Owen, and Francis Raley.

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MASTERWORKS CHORALE

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 29, 1998

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the 25th Anniversary concert season of the Masterworks Chorale in Belleville, Illinois and its founder and director, Dr. A. Dennis Sparger.

Masterworks Chorale began under the sponsorship of Belleville Area College as the BAC Community Chorus. In 1982, the chorus left the college and officially incorporated under the name Masterworks Chorale, Inc. The 65 members of the adult chorus must audition for their place in the group. The chorus has been awarded the first place gold medalion at the Great American Choral Festival competition, made the European Tour twice, sung with the St. Louis Symphony under the direction of Leonard Slatkin, and has been a major force in the arts in our community.

Dr. Sparger recently retired from the music faculty at Belleville Area College, where he served for 32 years. Under his baton, the Chorale has performed more than fifty major choral-orchestral works in the past 25 years. In addition to founding the Chorale, Dr. Sparger also founded the Masterworks Children's Chorus and was their director until 1990. In 1986, he was appointed music director and conductor of the Bach Society of St. Louis.

A native of Chicago, Dr. Sparger began musical studies at the age of eight and began conducting at sixteen. He earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees from Eastern Illinois University. In 1981, he was awarded a Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in conducting from the University of Illinois, where he studied under Harold Decker. According to Dr. Sparger, Harold Decker is responsible for teaching about 75 doctoral candidates during his career. These students have taken position at major universities and with symphonies around the nation. Dr. Sparger is the only one who chose to make his career at a community college. All of this makes Dr. Sparger's selection for the Harold A. Decker Choral Award, presented to him by the American Choral Directors Association of Illinois earlier this year, even more meaningful.

Masterworks Chorale is a member of the Arts and Education Council of Greater St.