

and Rescue Team answered their nation's call for help. Their work is not glamorous; they quite literally dug in, lifting away thousands of pounds of concrete and steel in the searing African sun. They labored in the face of danger, even switching hotels to evade the bombers, who were still at large. They labored in the face of horrific tragedy, but they never lost faith in their purpose.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in honoring the Urban Search and Rescue Team of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department. The men and women of Virginia Task Force One left their homes and families, traveling thousands of miles to represent the United States in a purely humanitarian mission. Their nobility of purpose and action was an honor to witness. I am proud to represent such heroic citizens.

#### STOPPING ABUSE OF MEDICARE LONG TERM CARE HOSPITAL PAYMENT SYSTEM

### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 9, 1998*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation today to close a loophole in the way Medicare pays long-term care hospitals—hospitals which treat people with severe problems and which have an average length of stay (ALOS) of more than 25 days.

Some so-called TEFRA hospitals establish extremely high patient costs in the first year or two of operation, which establishes the rate at which they will be paid under Medicare in future years. Once that rate is established, they immediately go to a much lower cost mix of patients, but get paid as if they still had a very sick, expensive patient caseload. The bill I am introducing would help curb this gaming of the system.

#### THE WORK OF CONGRESS

### HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 9, 1998*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, August 19, 1998 into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

#### THE WORK OF CONGRESS

The work of Congress often seems laborious and painfully slow. We hear complaints about legislative stalemate, excessive partisanship, and the "do-nothing" Congress. Sometimes it is hard to discern good reasons for the inefficiencies and delays that occur. But often the difficulty of passing legislation stems from the very nature of our representative democracy and from our changing country and changing political climate. The work of Congress has become much more difficult over the past several years.

The job of Congress: Although the job of a Congressman involves several different roles, the main ones are as representative and legislator. As a representative, a Member serves as an agent for his constituents, ensuring that their views are heard in Congress and that they are treated fairly by federal bureaucrats and other public officials. As a leg-

islator, a Member participates in the law-making process by drafting bills and amendments, engaging in debate, and attempting to build the consensus necessary to address our nation's problems. Fulfilling these roles may sound easy, but can be enormously difficult.

Some things, it must be said, have helped to make the work more manageable in recent years. Congress has moved into the information age, as computers, faxes, and Internet access help Members communicate with citizens. Large numbers of congressional staff help Members respond to constituent mail and research legislation. The expansion of think tanks and public policy research helps provide lawmakers with detailed analysis of policy options.

Increased difficulty: However, the elaborate constitutional system of separated powers and checks and balances created by our founding fathers still requires that compromise and consensus occur for legislation to pass. This protects people from the tyranny of the majority, but also makes it difficult for Congress to act. Since I have been in Congress the job of a Congressman has become increasingly difficult, for several reasons:

First, the country has grown larger and more diverse. The population of the country has more than doubled since I was in high school. Each Member of the House now represents almost 600,000 constituents; almost 50% more than in the 1960s. Americans also vary more now in terms of occupation, race, religion, and national origin. The increasingly diverse background of constituents expands the range of interests and differences that must be reconciled to produce consensus on major issues.

Second, the issues have grown more numerous and more complex. Today's Congress tackles a host of topics that simply were not around a few decades ago, from campaign "soft money" and HMO's to cloning and cyberspace. Also, the issues we consider have become more technical and complicated. A recent environmental bill before Congress reminded me of my college chemistry textbook.

Third, the issues have also become more partisan. The policy agenda always has included divisive items, but in past years these divisions typically were not partisan. An individual you disagreed with on one issue likely would support your view on many other items, making it easier to strike bargains and achieve consensus. With the intensity of American politics today, issues often have a sharper, partisan flavor. Policy debates frequently split constituents and their elected representatives by party, making the two major parties resemble warring camps more than potential partners in compromise.

Fourth, there are more policy players in the legislative process. For instance, in the 1960s just a handful of major groups were actively involved in foreign policy making. Now there are literally hundreds, including the business and agriculture communities, nonprofits and public interest groups, labor unions, ethnic groups, and international organizations. The cast of important players has similarly expanded in the numerous other policy areas.

Fifth, although the workload of Congress has expanded, the number of hours in session in recent years has actually dropped. The leadership has chosen to have the House now work basically only 2½ day weeks, with many Members arriving in Washington on Tuesday afternoon and leaving for their districts on Thursday evening. As a result, Members have less time to know each other well and to work out their differences, thus making consensus-building even harder.

Sixth, the cost of campaigns has skyrocketed, driven largely by the cost of tele-

vision advertising. Members today must spend a disproportionate amount of time fundraising, which means less time with constituents discussing the issues and less time with colleagues forging legislation and monitoring federal bureaucrats. Also, special interest support may drive some Members to lock in their views earlier, reducing their flexibility and making compromise harder.

Seventh, the tone in Congress has changed dramatically over the past several years, with more partisan bickering and personal attacks, and less civility. That takes a significant toll. It poisons the atmosphere and complicates the efforts of Members to come together and pass legislation for the good of the country. In the end, Congress works through a process of give and take, which is far more difficult with strained relationships across the aisle.

Eighth, the media tend to favor the extreme views on any given issue, emphasizing the differences and downplaying the areas of agreement. That can polarize the issue and make agreement more difficult to reach.

Finally, public suspicion of politicians is greater today than it was in past decades. Americans have always had a healthy skepticism about government, but problems arise when they become cynical and have little trust in what their leaders say or do. It is difficult for Members of Congress to even discuss the issues with constituents when their character, values and motives are always suspect.

Conclusion: It is easy to criticize Congress. As Members are clearly aware, many criticisms of the institution are justified. But we need to get beyond that and recognize that certain perceived shortcomings of Congress are actually inherent features of any legislature in a large, diverse, and complicated country. Members of Congress need a certain degree of trust from their constituents if they are to fulfill their roles as representative and legislator—not unconditional trust, but support meshed with constructive skepticism and a reasonable understanding of the difficulties the institution confronts.

#### DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE, AND STATE, AND JUDI- CIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1999

SPEECH OF

### HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, August 3, 1998*

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4276) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1999, and for other purposes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of the amendment, which would restore funding for the Legal Services Corporation to current levels.

The Legal Services Corporation is a lifeline for thousands of people with no other means of access to the legal system. Last year, LSC resolved 1.5 million civil cases, benefiting over four million indigent citizens from every country in America.

Who are these people? Over two-thirds are women, and most are mothers with children. Women seeking protection against abusive spouses. Children living in poverty and neglect. Elderly people threatened by eviction or

victimized by consumer fraud. Veterans denied benefits, and small farmers facing foreclosure.

These are the people who will be hurt if this amendment is not adopted today. If LSC is forced to absorb the huge cuts made in committee, half of the 1,100 neighborhood legal services offices will have to be closed. This will leave a single lawyer to serve every 23,600 poor Americans. Over 700,000 people in need of legal services will have to be turned away.

We cannot—we must not—allow this to happen. I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment. It's the decent thing to do.

REMARKS OF ERIC W. BENKEN,  
CHIEF MASTER SERGEANT OF  
THE AIR FORCE

**HON. BOB STUMP**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, September 9, 1998*

Mr. STUMP. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Chief Master Sergeant Eric W. Benken, who recently made some very insightful remarks regarding national security on August 22, 1998, at the Noncommissioned Officers Association 1998 Annual Awards Banquet, that I believe would be of interest to all the members of the House of Representatives:

CHALLENGING TIMES—BRIGHT FUTURE—  
STRENGTH IN UNITY

It's always tough to follow the Air Force Honor Guard Drill Team—outstanding individuals—anytime someone says there is something wrong with America's young people—I point to them as an example of what's right with America. And the Air Force Singing Sergeants—a magnificent group and I might add, the product of successful gender integrated training—they are no longer an all male chorus group like they were in the beginning!

Congressman Montgomery, sir, it's great to have you with us here tonight—a recipient of the Air Force Order of the Sword—the highest tribute that can be bestowed upon anyone by the enlisted force—a great patriot and ardent supporter of our military.

President and Mrs. Putnam, my service counterparts, members of the foreign joints, Vanguard Award Recipients and distinguished members of the Noncommissioned Officers Association. It's a tremendous pleasure for my wife Johnne and I to be here tonight as I address this distinguished audience of patriots and great Americans.

Tonight I want to talk to you a little bit about the challenges we face—and a little bit about our future.

First of all, it's important to recognize that this snapshot in history in which we live is like no other. There has never been another decade like the '90s. And the reason is simple—the cold war is over. For about 45 years it was NATO and the Warsaw Pact going toe to toe. We had the Berlin Wall that represented a visual distinction between democracy and communism—the separation of good and evil, if you will. Our tanks and artillery faced off in the Fulda Gap. We had large numbers of forward based installations with a policy of containment.

We lived under the umbrella of nuclear annihilation. Remember the drills we had in high school? An alarm would sound indicating a nuclear missile was inbound from the Soviet Union—and we would dive under our desk. Like that would do any good! And we

always had that fanatic next door who was building an underground fallout shelter. You remember vividly the Cuban Missile Crisis—when President Kennedy and Premier Khrushchev did political battle over the placement of missiles in Cuba.

In the early 1980s, President Reagan responded to the hollow force of the late '70s and the continuing cold war threat and began to rebuild our armed forces to take on the "Evil Empire." We had plenty of money for defense and plenty of people to do the mission. The '80s presented few problems for us in terms of manpower and resources, and deployments were few. Life was bliss.

In November of 1989, one of the most dynamic events of this century took place in Berlin. We watched on CNN as the wall was torn down. I was assigned to the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Mons, Belgium. We were knee deep in containment war plans. We couldn't believe our eyes at what was happening. What were we going to do next? As the wall fell and Germany was reunited, we got a sneak peek behind the iron curtain and found that communism had collapsed and the cold war was over—and we were the winners.

It was like going forward in your car for 45 years and suddenly throwing it into reverse. The world stage changed drastically. Many thought that NATO should be disbanded. Nations demanded money spent for defense be returned to the people for domestic programs. The world wanted a "peace dividend." And the United States was no different. And we began to reduce our military establishment—both in terms of personnel and installations.

New terms showed up in our vocabulary. Terms like BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure). Our overseas presence was tremendously reduced and we brought forces and equipment home.

And while many thought our job might be over, our missions actually began to increase. We found ourselves embroiled in "hot spots." We began doing humanitarian and disaster relief missions. Rwanda, Somalia, Liberia, Haiti and Bosnia came up on the scope. Bare base operations like Prince Sultan, El Jabber, Ali Asalem, Doha, Qatar, Baharain; Rhijad, San Vito and others. Places where Americans in uniform must deploy, live and fight. And we continue to deal with Saddam—a millstone around our neck. Our Air Force people alone began to deploy at 4 times the rate they did in the "blissful" '80s.

The '90s present a whole new set of challenges. More new terms like Op Tempo and Pers Tempo. We didn't get enough relief from the first round of BRAC—and we are spread too thin across too much real estate. That is why you hear us persistently ask Congress for more BRAC.

The drawdown meant the loss of skill levels in the ranks as we carved out the middle of the force. We have training shortfalls. We had to find a new way to deliver health care to 9 million eligibles—and Tricare popped up on the scope. We have aging weapons systems—we cannibalize parts from two weapon systems to get one functioning. We have a monotonous desert rotation—slipping readiness posture—outsourcing and privatization are being thrust upon us.

We deal with all of this against the backdrop of the Balanced Budget Amendment and a flatlined defense budget. It forces us to make tough decisions on whether to modernize, sustain readiness or improve quality of life.

For the Army and the Air Force—we must make the transformation to become more expeditionary. Lighter and leaner—not reliant on forward based locations and assets. This presents a cultural change for our peo-

ple who must change how they do business—and old habits die hard.

Add into all of this retention challenges presented by an overheating economy and low unemployment across the country. The private sector competes for our highly trained and highly disciplined technicians and lure them away with more pay and in many cases better compensation. There is plenty of money for young people to go to college and the propensity to serve has diminished. Recruiters are having a very difficult time making quotas while maintaining quality. There are frustrations with op tempo and pers tempo—the changed retirement system is seen as a breach of faith and Tricare has had some tough times with implementation.

For myself and my service counterparts, we have increased congressional contact on a variety of subjects like gender integrated training—trying to convince them each service knows how to train their people the right way. We've discussed fraternization rules, readiness and quality of life and their impact on our troops.

As General Mike Ryan, Air Force Chief of Staff says, "This is not my father's Air Force." And I would submit that this saying applies to all of our armed forces as they relate to the decade of the '90s.

This scenario has certainly produced its share of "prophets of doom and gloom." Newspapers have editorials from naysayers attacking senior leadership and publicly displaying their disgruntlement over current situations. Some among our own ranks would counsel our troops against making the military a career because "it isn't as good as it used to be." Whatever that means!

The reality is this—the armed forces still offer a great way of life for young Americans. We still offer tremendous opportunity—skills training—and we do it in an environment of equal opportunity. We still offer an exciting way of life. And this nation still needs patriotic Americans who are willing to sacrifice for their nation and win her wars.

As Sgt. Major of the Marine Corps Lee said in a meeting today, "it's time to accentuate the positive things about our armed forces and our special way of life—and stop listening to the negative.

The fact is, we have inherited a new world order. The world stage has changed—it's more complicated and our roles and missions have been modified. We must make adjustments—and we will—we will attack these challenges like we have always done in the past—with hard work and innovation!

I believe our future is extremely bright. Despite all our challenges, we still have a tremendous corps of young people who are nothing short of fantastic—they exceed all expectations. Their technical skills are something to marvel. When I entered the Air Force back in 1970, our top of the line equipment in the orderly room was the Underwood Five manual typewriter. Today, that same recruit is involved in LAN administration—with advanced computer skills—some even work in the Information Superiority Battle Lab at the Air Intelligence Agency in San Antonio. And as our troops become more and more technically qualified in a variety of skills—we'll have to be competitive if we want to secure their skills for the long run—that's just a fact of life.

And we need to help our young troops keep focus on the vision of our armed forces of the future. We must instill in them enthusiasm and optimism. As General Colin Powell said, "Never take counsel of our fears or naysayers." He also said, "Optimism is a force multiplier."

We need to remind our troops that the military gave them all they ever needed to