

those who provide needed medical care through the program. So today I am submitting to the Commission the written comments we received at our town hall meetings. Let me briefly summarize these comments for you.

#### TESTIMONY AT TWO TOWN HALL MEETINGS

The point made most frequently in written comments was that Medicare should not impose stringent limits on home health care services. The logic of providing home health services is clear: seniors are happier and healthier if they can remain in their own homes, with some assistance, and sustain a level of independence. And increased institutionalization obviously means increased long term costs for the program.

Other frequent comments included the need to provide prescription drug coverage and long term care services through Medicare. One woman noted that, "Sometimes I have to do without a prescribed medication until I receive my Social Security check at the first of the month."

Others voiced their support for an expanded Medicare program in which millions more Americans are eligible for services. It is no secret that if younger and healthier individuals sign up for Medicare and pay premiums, the average cost per beneficiary will fall. Several people who filled out comment forms warned against efforts to privatize Medicare or compromise the program through Medicare savings accounts.

Others argued for including providing prevention, dental and vision services. The importance of these services requires no explanation. In an era when we are insisting all health care providers deliver more comprehensive prevention services, we should demand the same from Medicare. One woman suggested that Medicare require all HMOs to provide a toll free hotline to consumers.

#### COMMENTS FROM MEDICARE PROVIDERS

Medicare providers in my district also spoke at the town hall meetings about the challenges they face in providing care. The interim payment system for home health agencies has imposed a heavy financial burden on providers. Medicare providers have also supported legislative efforts to carve out disproportionate share hospital payments from payments to HMOs, eliminate the 100 bed requirement for qualification as a disproportionate share hospital, and repeal of the financial penalty for hospitals that transfer patients to other care settings before the DRG period has expired.

#### CONCERNS OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS

The AIDS epidemic has taken a devastating toll in my district, and Medicare plays a significant role in provision of health care to individuals affected by this epidemic. It is estimated that between 6% and 20% of people with HIV/AIDS rely on Medicare for some or all of their health care services. The Centers for Disease Control has estimated that between 10,565 and 22,927 Medicare beneficiaries are diagnosed with AIDS.

A recent report published by the Academy for Educational Development documents several concerns about HIV-related health care services under Medicare. First, because the program does not cover the costs of prescription drugs, beneficiaries are forced to find other means of acquiring the expensive but promising new drug treatments for HIV infection. These drugs can cost \$12,000 per year or more.

The report notes several other problems for people with HIV including, "the lack of guaranteed availability of individual supplemental insurance for the disabled under the age of 65, the lack of guaranteed availability of HIV specialists in Medicare managed care plans, the inadequacy of community-based

and home care services to address the ongoing chronic nature of the HIV disease process, and the limitations of the hospice benefit for addressing the acute treatment needs of people in the terminal stage of HIV disease." I am submitting a copy of this report with the town hall meeting testimony noted above.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

A number of recommendations for reform of Medicare follow from the testimony and policy research presented above. Below is a list of recommendations. In some cases, I have noted legislation I have cosponsored that is consistent with these recommendations.

##### *Expand services available in Medicare*

Medicare should provide comprehensive and cost effective care to those who are eligible for the program. The program should provide reimbursement for needed drug therapies, long term care services, dental and vision care, and prevention services. The Medically Necessary Dental Care Act (H.R. 1288) would provide coverage for outpatient dental procedures.

##### *Expand eligibility for Medicare*

Medicare can serve as the foundation for increased access to health care for all Americans. I urge the Commission to identify ways in which eligibility for the program can be expanded. The Medicare Early Access Act (H.R. 3470) is consistent with this proposal. The bill would allow many of the "near elderly" to buy in to Medicare. We need to build upon this legislation to ensure that any buy in is affordable for all those who need health insurance coverage.

##### *Address legitimate concerns of Medicare providers*

The interim payment system for home health agencies threatens to put many providers out of business. Congress and the Commission must urgently address the need to develop a more equitable payment system for home health care. The Medicare Home Health Beneficiary Protection Act (H.R. 4339) places a moratorium on the interim payment system for home health care.

The Commission should also take steps to protect reimbursement to disproportionate share hospitals. H.R. 2701 would "carve out" disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments from the payment we give HMOs.

In addition, the 100 bed requirement for qualification as a DSH should be repealed.

The disincentive for early hospital discharge should be eliminated. The Common Sense Hospital Payment Act (H.R. 2908) repeals the financial penalty for hospitals that transfer patients to other care settings before the DRG payment period has expired.

##### *Address concerns of People with AIDS and other disabilities*

As people with AIDS live longer lives, more will become eligible for Medicare. The Commission should make several changes in the program to address the needs of this growing population, including: guaranteed availability of supplemental Medicare insurance for disabled individuals; guaranteed access to an HIV expert as a primary care provider and for specialist services; and elimination of the limitation on hospice benefits that bars people from receiving some needed acute care treatments while in hospice care.

In addition, I encourage the Commission to study the interaction between Medicare, Medicaid, and Ryan White CARE program services, particularly in the provision of community based support services.

I look forward to working with the Commission to build a fiscally sound and expanded Medicare program. Thank you again for the opportunity to present these perspectives.

## CONGRATULATIONS TO CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 25, 1998*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, today, after nearly a half-century as a member of California's higher education community, California Baptist College becomes California Baptist University. Cal Baptist, founded in 1950, was housed in a borrowed church building for its first four years, moved to its present Riverside location in 1954 and earned accreditation in 1961.

The college reaches this milestone under the leadership of Dr. Ronald L. Ellis, president since 1994. Former presidents are Dr. P. Boyd Smith, 1950-57; Dr. Loyed R. Simmons, 1958-69; Dr. James R. Staples, 1970-84; and Dr. Russell R. Tuck, 1984-94.

During the 1980's, the college was on the cutting edge of non-traditional education when it established the Business Executive program, the pre-cursor to the current Evening Degree-Completion program for working adults. In the mid-eighties, the college added its first post-graduate degree, a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology. Three years ago, the college added a Master of Education degree and, last year, the Master of Business Administration degree. From 1994 to 1997, the institutional enrollment increased 149 percent, much of it through graduate and Evening Degree-Completion programs.

California Baptist College has consistently produced well-schooled graduates. Scores of children in my district are the beneficiaries of that product as they thrive under the teaching of Cal Baptist alumni. The graduates of Cal Baptist's Master's degree program in Counseling Psychology have an unusually high pass rate on the state licensing exam. Cal Baptist alumni serve in the Riverside police department, city government, management in our local banking institutions, a broad array of social service agencies, and church-related positions on a global scale.

California Baptist College—now university—is in the business of preparing complete people, people who are equipped to make a difference. The university provides an environment that fosters not only intellectual development, but spiritual, emotional, physical, and character development. Students are involved in outreach to the homeless; tutoring programs at the county juvenile facility and Sherman Indian High School, a local Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding school; city clean up projects; and the City of Riverside's Study Circles on Race Relations.

The university adheres to a high ethical standard, the kind of standard to which our nation has traditionally aspired and which we continue to uphold as the mark of the truly successful. On behalf of the residents of the 43rd Congressional District, it is an honor to congratulate California Baptist University upon the occasion of their transition to university status.

INTRODUCTION OF VISIT USA  
LEGISLATION**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 25, 1998*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, as a cochair of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus, I am honored today to introduce the "Value in Supporting International Tourism in the United States Act of 1998" or the "Visit USA Act". My caucus cochair, Rep. MARK FOLEY of Florida, joins me in dropping this important bill.

Why do we need an NTO?

The reason is simple—it makes good economic sense. The travel and tourism industry is one of the Nation's largest employers, providing 16.2 million jobs. It directly employ 7 million people, and indirectly employs an additional 9.2 million Americans. 92 percent of the tourism industry is composed of small- and medium-sized businesses throughout every region of the country.

The industry ranks as the first, second, or third largest employer in 32 States and the District of Columbia, generating a total tourism-related annual payroll of \$127.9 billion.

In my district on the central coast of California, it is the second largest industry, bringing in more than \$2 billion and directly employing close to 26,000 residents.

The industry has become the Nation's third-largest retail sales industry, generating a total of \$489 billion in total expenditures. The industry generated \$71.7 billion in tax revenues for federal, state, and local governments.

While the private sector, States, and localities currently spend more than \$1 billion annually to promote particular destinations within the United States to international visitors, the Federal Government spends zero dollars—zero dollars—promoting the United States as a tourist destination.

In 1997, more than 54 million foreign visitors spent \$98 billion in the United States. Imagine the benefits to our Nation's economy if we were to actively seek foreign visitors.

In 1997, 17.9 million more people visited France than the United States. Yes, 17.9 million more people chose to visit France over the United States. One hundred nations around the world spend hundreds of millions of dollars annually to promote international tourism in their countries. And each year the United States loses more of its market share to nations actively promoting tourism. By dropping this bill, we hope to change this trend.

The Visit USA Act will establish an Intergovernmental Task Force for International Visitor Assistance. The task force will examine signage and make suggestions where necessary to facilitate international visitors' travel in the United States. The task force will address the availability of multilingual travel and tourism information and the means of disseminating such information.

The task force will also examine the feasibility of establishing a toll-free, private-sector operated, telephone number, staffed by multilingual operators, to provide emergency assistance to international tourists.

Additionally, this legislation instructs the Secretary of Commerce to complete, as soon as may be practicable, a satellite system of accounting for the travel and tourism industry.

The satellite system of accounting would provide Congress and the President with objective, thorough data that would help policymakers more accurately gauge the size and scope of the domestic travel and tourism industry and its significant impact on the health of the Nation's economy.

Let me assure my colleagues who were skeptical of the NTO that this bill is not business as usual. The Visit USA Act requires the travel and tourism industry to match every public dollar spent on marketing the United States with private funds and requires the industry to pay the administrative expenses of the NTO.

I encourage my colleagues to review this bill, think about the impact of the tourism industry in their district, and become a cosponsor of the Visit USA Act.

## THE WORLD IS WATCHING

**HON. JOE SCARBOROUGH**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 25, 1998*

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, the world watches while China begins her long march toward superpower status. Regrettably, the view is exceedingly grim for those concerned with the continued abuse of their citizen's most basic human rights.

The current American administration has promised progress in China in return for more open markets. Of course we recognize that this administration, like so many others, is blinded by the vision of China as the next great export market. Further enticing the President is the realization that cheap Chinese imports fuel America's economy by driving inflation down. The sad truth that underlies this economic phenomenon is that Chinese slave labor is the economic engine that drives America's inflation downward.

Will America conclude that such an economic truth is acceptable, or will it conclude instead that cheap goods paid with human blood is far too expensive for our taste. As America decides, the beast slouches toward Bethlehem.

This past week, United Nations Commissioner Mary Robinson visited Communist China. The Washington Post reported that while entering her hotel, the wife of a jailed Chinese political leader was hauled off by Chinese security agents.

During Ms. Robinson's visit, a veteran Chinese democratic activist was arrested for attempting to register a free party in China. In Shanghai, Yao Zhenxian was also arrested for discussing the formation of a party.

A journalist was dragged from his home on September 5 for editing a group of essays on political reform written by government scholars and journalists, according to the Washington Post. Shi Binhai was arrested for nothing more than being a journalist reporting on his country's future.

America remains silent.

In his book on Robert F. Kennedy, Maxwell Kennedy introduces his work with a quote from his father's daybook. In that collection of quotes, Bobby Kennedy scribbled the following words: "No one can usurp the height but those to whom the miseries of the world are a misery and will not let them rest."

In plain view of the butchering of Buddhist culture in Tibet, we quietly slumber. In clear view of Christian persecution in communist China, America sleeps peacefully. In plain view of the entire world, America slouches towards an economically rewarding relationship with China that, unchecked by Western values given to us first in ancient Greece, could rot our nation's soul.

The whole world is watching. Chicago, 1968. . . . Washington, 1998.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE VIC  
FAZIO

SPEECH OF

**HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, September 24, 1998*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to pay tribute to the fine gentleman from California, Mr. VIC FAZIO. We have been extremely blessed to have such a hard-working, fair leader in the Democratic Caucus and the House of Representatives. He has always tried to assist all Members, no matter what side of the aisle they are on. VIC FAZIO has consistently possessed a keen understanding of what it truly means to be a public servant. Through his dedication to listening to the needs of the American people and unfaltering leadership, VIC FAZIO has served as a strong role model for all current and future Members of the House of Representatives.

Vic, I congratulate you on your retirement, and thank you for setting such a high standard of excellence and integrity.

MODERATE POLITICAL LEADERS  
IN BOSNIA DESERVE SUPPORT**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Friday, September 25, 1998*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, while the results of the recent elections in Bosnia have been mixed, with the U.S. backed candidate for President of the Republic of Srpska—the Serb controlled part of Bosnia—defeated by a hardline ultranationalist, it is important for us to continue to support moderate political leaders in Srpska and throughout Bosnia Herzegovina. Although the ultranationalists have won the Presidency in Srpska, moderate political parties appear to still retain a plurality of seats in the Srpska parliament, and current Prime Minister Dodik, who has been a staunch supporter of political reform and the Dayton Peace Agreement, could still form a government.

For those who may not know him, Prime Minister Dodik is a courageous individual who has attempted to lead Bosnian Serbs away from the strident nationalism that caused the conflict in the former Yugoslavia toward political reform, ethnic reconciliation, and economic empowerment. During the war in Bosnia, Dodik, at some personal risk, spoke out against Serb persecution of Muslims and Croats. Since becoming Prime Minister in January 1998, Dodik has moved swiftly to implement political and economic reforms that enabled the Bosnian Serbs in many parts of