Wade. Kristina Kiehl, a Californian, will celebrate her 50th birthday on Saturday, January 23. Kristina has spent most of those 50 years working to ensure reproductive choice, equality and human rights for all Americans, regardless of race, sex, ethnic background, sexual orientation or, other characteristics irrelevant to merit.

As a founder of Voters for Choice, a national bi-partisan organization dedicated to protecting and expanding reproductive choice for women, Kristina has been a pioneer in protecting the reproductive rights and health of women. With her leadership, Voters for Choice has helped to develop leaders across our country on choice issues; to educate Americans about reproductive issues; and to train advocates for this important work. For 18 years, Voters for Choice has been a superbly effective organization that has led the fight for many women's health issues, in no small part because of Kristina's commitment, dedication, energy and leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I am especially pleased and very proud to honor and recognize the accomplishments of Kristina Kiehl, a national leader who has dedicated her life to improving the health and protecting the reproductive rights of Americans. I urge my colleagues in this House to join me in saluting Kristina Kiehl.

COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION ANTIPIRACY ACT

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the ''Collections of Information Antipiracy Act,'' a bill to encourage continued investment in the production and distribution of valuable new collections of information.

Electronic collections, and other collections of factual material, are absolutely indispensable to the American economy on the verge of the new century. These information products put a wealth of data at the fingertips of business people, professionals, scientists, scholars, and consumers, and enable them to retrieve from this haystack of information the specific factual needle that they need to solve a particular economic, research, or educational problem. Whether they focus on financial, scientific, legal, medical, bibliographic, news, or other information, collections of information are essential tools for improving productivity, advancing education and training, and creating a more informed citizenry. They are also the linchpins of a dynamic commercial information industry in the United States.

Developing, compiling, distributing, and maintaining commercially significant collections requires substantial investments of time, personnel, and money. Information companies must dedicate massive resources when gathering and verifying factual material, presenting it in a user-friendly way, and keeping it current for and useful to customers. U.S. firms have been the world leaders in this field. They have brought to market a wide range of valuable collections of information that meet the information needs of businesses, professionals, researchers, and consumers worldwide. But several recent legal and technological developments threaten to cast a pall over this progress, by eroding the incentives for the continued investment needed to maintain and build upon the U.S. lead in world markets for electronic information resources.

Producers are also concerned that several recent cases may also cast doubt on the ability of a proprietor to use contractual provisions to protect itself against unfair competition from such ''free riders.'' In cyberspace, technological developments represent a threat as well as an opportunity for collections of information, just as for other kinds of works. Copying factual material from another's proprietary collection, and rearranging it to form a competing information production—just the kind of behaviors that copyright protection may not effectively prevent—is cheaper and easier than ever through digital technology that is now in widespread use. More and more we are seeing actual instances where American companies fall victim to such piracy, or where they refrain from placing complete collections into the public discourse, for fear of piracy.

When all these factors are added together, the bottom line is clear: it is time to consider new federal legislation to protect developers who place their materials in interstate commerce against piracy and unfair competition, and thus encourage continued investment in the production and distribution of valuable commercial collections of information.

While copyright, on the federal level, and state contract law underlying licensing agreements remain essential tools for protecting the enormous investment in collections of information, there are gaps in the protection that can best be filled by a new federal statute which will complement copyright law. The ''Collections of Information Antipiracy Act'' would prohibit the misappropriation of valuable commercial collections of information by unscrupulous competitors who grab data collected by others, repackage it, and market a product that threatens competitive injury to the original collection. This new federal protection is modeled in part on the Lanham Act, which already makes similar kinds of unfair competition a civil wrong under federal law. Importantly, this bill maintains existing protections for collections of information afforded by copyright and contract rights. It is intended to supplement these legal rights, not replace them.

Throughout the last session of Congress, we worked countless hours trying to fashion a bill that would be acceptable to all interested parties. Some would like to see stronger protections, while others advocate no legislation at all. I promise once again to listen to every constructive suggestion, and use every effort to craft a solution which bridges the producer and user communities. But I am committed to seeing this valuable legislation become law.

While this bill is almost identical to the legislation which passed the House of Representatives last Congress, I have made changes to clarify and embody fair use, and to address the issue of perpetual protection. These two changes address key concerns voiced by the nonprofit scientific, educational, and research communities during our consideration last term.

During the last Congress, we were able to pass the legislation through the House of Representatives not once, but twice. I look forward to working with Senator ORRIN HATCH and Senator PATRICK LEAHY, who have indicated this necessary legislation will be a priority for them this legislative session. I also welcome the input of Representative HOWARD BERMAN, the new Ranking Member of the Subcommittee, as this legislation moves forward.

The Collections of Information Antipiracy Act is a balanced proposal. It is aimed at actual or threatened competitive injury from misappropriation of collections of information or their contents, not at uses which do not affect marketability or competitiveness. The goal is to stimulate the creation of even more collections, and to encourage even more competition among them. The bill avoids conferring any monopoly on facts, or taking any other steps that might be inconsistent with these goals.

This legislation provides the basis for legislative activity on an important and complex subject. I look forward to hearing the suggestions and reactions of interested parties, and of my colleagues.

THE RETURN OF THE ''LINCOLN BANNER'' TO NORWICH, CONNECTICUT

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate a momentous event in the history of Norwich, Connecticut. On January 22, 1999, the fully-restored ''Lincoln Banner'' will be unveiled. The story surrounding the discovery and restoration of this 138 year old artifact is a testament to the spirit of volunteerism and pride in our history which have long distinguished Americans.

The ''Lincoln Banner'' is so named because it depicts Abraham Lincoln, without his beard, at approximately age 51 on a 6 by 8 foot silk banner. A portrait of Lincoln graces the center of the banner and is surrounded by the following inscription—''In hoc signo Vincemus. Ubi Libertas, Ibi Patria''—which roughly translates to ''In this sign we are victorious. One for liberty under the fatherland.'' ''Norwich'' is inscribed in capital letters across the bottom.

The origins and exact use of the banner are known conclusively only to history herself. However, most in Norwich believe it was produced for Lincoln's presidential campaign and displayed during his visit to the community on March 9, 1860. Mr. Lincoln did not come to Norwich seeking support for his election. Instead, he came to help a fellow Republican—Governor William Buckingham—who was seeking reelection. Local historians believe the banner hung outside the Wauregan Hotel where Lincoln stayed.

Following Mr. Lincoln's visit, the banner essentially vanished for more than 135 years. Then, in 1997, officials in Norwich received a telephone call from an auction house in my state indicating that it had recently been contacted by an individual who wished to sell the banner. A spontaneous, grassroots effort, initiated by John Marasco, a city employee, who went on local radio station WICH with personality Johnny London to urge listeners to contribute, raised nearly $41,000 from residents, businesses and others in the community. As a result of this tremendous amount of support, the City was able to purchase the banner and bring it back to its rightful home.

After nearly 140 years, the banner was in poor condition. It was torn and tattered and in need of restoration. With more assistance from the community and significant support from the City of Norwich, a group formed to preserve the banner—the Norwich-Lincoln Homecoming Committee—was able to send it to be expertly restored by the Textile Conservation Center at the American Textile Museum in Lowell, Massachusetts. On January 22, the banner will be returned permanently to Norwich. It will become the centerpiece of an exhibit at the Slater Museum entitled ''Norwich, Lincoln and the Civil War.'' After the exhibit closes, the banner will be displayed in City Hall for all to see.

Mr. Speaker, the return of the ''Lincoln Banner'' to Norwich brings the community full circle and closes an important loop in its history. The effort to purchase and preserve the banner demonstrates that pride in the community and our heritage is alive and well in American today. I believe President Lincoln would be proud of, and probably more than a little humbled by, the community's efforts to preserve an important part of the past. I know I speak for the entire community when I say ''Welcome Back, Mr. President.''

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Plant Genetic Conservation Appropriations Act of 2000 that provides $1.5 million for a genetic plant conservation project that collects and preserves genetic material from our Nation's endangered plants.

While the Fish and Wildlife Service continues to make strides in battling the war against further extinction of endangered species, we must do more. As of 1997 when I originally introduced this legislation, there were 513 plants listed as Endangered and 101 as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Today, there are 567 plants listed as endangered and 135 as threatened. The need to supplement the Fish and Wildlife Services work is critical.

I believe a crucial part of the solution to save our endangered species is the genetic plant conservation project, which can help save and catalog genetic material for later propagation. As genetic technology develops, we will have saved the essential materials necessary to restore plant populations.

The Plant Genetic Conservation Appropriations Act of 2000 requests $1.5 million for activities such as rare plant monitoring and sampling, seed bank upgrade and curation, propagation of endangered plant collections, expanded greenhouse capacity, nursery construction, cryogenic storage research, and in-vitro storage expansion.

In my home state of Hawaii, the endangered plant population sadly comprises 46 percent of the total U.S. plants listed as endangered. And our endangered plant list continues to grow. We cannot afford to wait any longer. By allocating the resources and allowing scientists to collect the genetic samples now, we can ensure our endangered plants will survive.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the Plant Genetic Conservation Appropriations Act 2000. This necessary bill can lead us to preserving plants that many of our ecosystems cannot afford to lose.

TRIBUTE TO THE NEW HAVEN LIONS CLUB

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to have the opportunity to recognize the achievements of a very special organization. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting the Lions Club of New Haven, Michigan as they celebrate their 50th Anniversary on January 23, 1999.

In 1948, the New Haven Lions Club was organized by the Richmond Lions Club and chartered with thirty-three members. Though their membership has grown and changed, their goal has remained the same: to dedicate their talents to people in need. During the 1996–97 year they assisted other local clubs in building a fully handicapped accessible cottage at the Bear Lake Lions Visually Impaired Youth Camp. In 1983, the club organized the New Haven Goodfellows. Each year during the holidays, they assist many families by providing food and toys for the children. The club is dedicated to community service through their membership.

During the last fifty year, members of the Lions Club have contributed their time and resources to the betterment of their community. Among their many contributions include building the Lenox Library, purchasing eye exams and glasses for area residents, sponsoring the Lioness Club, and funding scholarships for New Haven High School graduates. The members have also been strong supporters of Boy Scouts, the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, and Leader Dogs for the Blind. The club has loaned out wheel chairs, walkers, crutches, canes and hospital beds. I would like to thank all of the members, past and present, who have donated their various talents to improve the quality of life in the New Haven community.

The self sacrificing qualities of the Lions Club members are what makes our communities successful. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing the Lions Club of New Haven a Joyful 50th Anniversary. Their legacy of public service is sure to last well beyond another fifty years.

OVERDUE FOR OVERALL—THE MINING LAW OF 1872

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 19, 1999

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, later this year, on May 10, the General Mining Law will be 127 years old—yet, it remains on the books without change in regard to gold, silver and other ''hard rock'' minerals. Lack of Congressional action to reform this archaic law is indefensible—albeit a testament to the strength of the mining industry's influence on certain key Members who have consistently blocked any attempt to amend or replace the law during the past two Congresses. Written to encourage settlement of the West during the last century, the Mining Law of 1872 provides an automatic legal right to our Nation's hard rock mineral wealth to those interested in developing it. The law is long overdue for a major overhaul to save taxpayers and the environment from further losses.

This antiquated relic allows mining operators nearly unlimited access to our Nation's hard rock minerals, no matter what other values (such as fish and wildlife habitat) may also be present. The law lets mining companies extract the minerals without paying a royalty or other production fee to the Federal Government. Finally, the lucky prospector who discovers gold or another hard rock mineral has the right to ''patent'' (purchase) the land and the minerals without paying fair market value.

Since Ulysses S. Grant signed the law in 1872, American taxpayers have lost about 3.2 million acres of public land containing more than $231 billion in gold, silver and valuable minerals without benefit of royalties or other fees. This is corporate welfare that subsidizes both foreign and domestic mining companies and should be stopped.

Under the 1872 mining law, the U.S. cannot collect a royalty or fee on the production value of hard rock minerals extracted from public lands. This differs from Federal policy toward coal, oil and gas industries operating on public lands, the laws and regulations of state governments, and leasing arrangements in the private sector. The U.S. collects a 12.5 percent royalty on coal, oil and gas (and an even higher royalty is collected from offshore petroleum development). The Federal Government collects production royalties on ''leasable minerals'' such as phosphate, potassium, sodium and sulphur. We also require a royalty on all minerals extracted from ''acquired lands,'' which are lands that the federal government has purchased, condemned or received as a gift.

All western States collect a royalty or production fee from minerals removed from State lands, collecting between 2 percent and 10 percent on the gross income from mineral production. Besides a royalty, 10 western States also collect a severance tax on certain minerals extracted from any land in the States, whether it is Federal, State or privately-owned. On private lands, royalties are usually similar to those imposed on federal and state lands and are usually set at 2 percent to 8 percent of gross income.

As Stuart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior, has noted, hard rock mining has made many men wealthy, built great corporations and caused cities to spring up in the wilderness. But this prosperity has come with a price. Over the past century, irresponsible and unwise mining operators have devastated over half a million acres of land—by acting without thought for the future or by simply walking away from played-out mines. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), mine wastes have polluted more than 12,000 miles of our Nation's waterways and 180,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs. Abandoned mines threaten public safety and health while creating long-lasting environmental hazards. Toxic mine wastes endanger people, destroy aquatic habitat, and contaminate vital ground water resources. The Mineral Policy Center