

We have an opportunity this year to make improvements to the Medicare+Choice program that will protect beneficiaries when health plans make business decisions about whether to continue participating in Medicare. This bill makes those improvements without senselessly increasing Medicare expenditures on a program that already costs more than traditional Medicare. I look forward to working with my colleagues to make these important, reasonable, and necessary fixes to the Medicare+Choice program.

CURRENT MEDICARE OVERPAYMENTS TO MANAGED CARE PLANS

[Prepared by Rep. Pete Stark staff]

Source of overpayment	Cost to medicare	Source of analysis
Overpayments due to BBA change that removed HCFA's ability to recover overpayments when health care inflation is lower than expected.	\$800 million in 1997 .. \$8.7 billion over 5 years. \$31 billion over 10 years.	Congressional Budget Office.
Overpayments due to lack of risk adjustment.	5-6% overpayment to HMOs per beneficiary who is enrolled.	Physician Payment Review Commission (now MedPAC) 1996 Annual Report.
Overpayments due to inflation of Medicare's share of plan administrative costs.	More than \$1 billion annually.	HHS Office of Inspector General July 1998.
Overpayments due to inclusion of fraud, waste and abuse dollars from FFS payments. Managed care plans should better "manage" and therefore avoid such fraud, waste and abuse.	7% annual overpayment. Annual savings with a corrected 1997 base year would be: \$5 billion in 2002 ... \$10 billion in 2007	HHS Office of Inspector General Sept. 11, 1998.

INTERNATIONAL CUSTOMS DAY

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 1999

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, The World Customs Organization [WCO] designated January 26 as International Customs Day, a time to give recognition to customs services around the world for the role they play in generating revenue and protecting national borders from unauthorized imports.

The U.S. Customs Service represents the United States in the World Customs Organization which, since 1953, has grown into a 142-member international organization. The WCO's purpose is to facilitate international trade, promote cooperation between governments on customs matters, and standardize and simplify customs procedures internationally. It also offers technical assistance in the areas of customs validation, nomenclature, and law enforcement. The organization's objective is to obtain the highest possible level of uniformity among the customs systems of its member countries. The involvement of the U.S. Customs Service in the WCO reflects the recognition that our country and its trading partners benefit when international trade is facilitated by simple, unambiguous customs operations around the world.

I take this opportunity to offer my congratulations to the World Customs Organization on its past accomplishments and wish it well in its ambitious efforts to further harmonize and simplify customs regulations. I also congratulate the U.S. Customs Service for its many years of fine work both domestically and internationally.

THE 509TH BOMB WING—SECOND TO NONE

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 1999

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me take this means to pay tribute to the successful leadership of the 509th Bomb Wing at Whiteman Air Force Base, MO. This superb military unit, located in West-Central Missouri and in the heart of my Congressional District, is home to the B-2 Stealth Bombers.

The history of Whiteman AFB is rich in tradition. In 1981, I began my work to make sure Whiteman AFB would have a future in the rapidly changing military arena, insisting on modernizing what was then becoming a run-down missile base. This modernization set the stage for 21 B-2 bombers that will eventually be based at Whiteman.

People living in the proximity of Whiteman AFB have a great opportunity to observe regularly what can be described as the premier United States Air Force Base. Attesting to the top quality of the base's 509th Bomb Wing was a recent mission in which three B-2s were deployed to Guam for a month of training exercises with 250 troops and other Air Force bombers. The returning B-2s were met at Whiteman by an honor guard and their two commanders, Lt. General Ronald C. Marcotte, the commander of the 8th Air Force, and Brig. General Leroy Barnidge, Jr., present commander of the 509th Wing.

Both commanders praised the success of the training exercise which combined a global power mission with precision bombing training on targets in the South Pacific. The praise of the 509th was given for good reason. Their team performed flawlessly and received high praise on every daily report.

Mr. Speaker, the success of the 509th is due to the high caliber leadership at both the 8th Air Force and Whiteman AFB. Lt. General Marcotte and Brig. General Barnidge possess the expertise and high quality leadership that makes our national defense second to none. The U.S. Air Force and other branches of military service merit the support of every American, including all Members of Congress.

HONORING MARTIN L. KING, FIREFIGHTER, CITY OF NEW HAVEN

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 1999

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, November 17, 1998, family and friends will come together to hold a testimonial dinner to honor Martin L. King, who retired from the New Haven Fire Department after forty-eight years. It is with great pleasure that I salute Marty King and his notable career of service to the New Haven Fire Department.

Marty King's career as a firefighter began in 1953 when he was transferred from his first public service job with the New Haven Police Department. Marty served the police department with distinction for two years, but his heart was with the fire service. In 1954, Marty was assigned to the old Central Fire Station

on Court Street. It was from this point that he launched his long career of courage and commitment to his community.

Because of Marty's hard work and strong devotion, he was promoted to lieutenant in 1967 where he was assigned to the Lombard Street Station. Following his duty there, he was transferred to headquarters as a veteran firefighter. For the past ten years, Marty worked as an administrative aide in the fire chief's office.

Marty earned a number of awards during the course of his career. He received many citations and a commendation for his bravery, and was also honored as the Fireman of the Year in 1993. Most notably, Marty was presented with the 35-year award from the Connecticut State Fireman's Association in 1987. His awards serve as a testament to his dedication to fire fighting and to protecting residents of New Haven. In addition to his outstanding record with the Department, Marty proudly served his country by joining the Navy during World War II.

Marty remains a legend to many, being the oldest member of the department in years of service, and the last active fireman who fought the most devastating fire the City had ever witnessed. The incident occurred when the factory on Franklin Street caught fire. Tragically, 15 people lost their lives.

I am very pleased to join Marty's colleagues and friends, his wife Kathryn, his six children, and his grandchildren in congratulating him on his retirement. His departure is a great loss to the Department. His efforts have made this City a better and safer place to live. Indeed, Marty, has left an indelible mark on the City of New Haven. I thank you for a lifetime of extraordinary services to the public, and I wish you much health and happiness in your retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE JOSEPH BOYD PRIVATE RELIEF BILL

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 2, 1999

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I must introduce a private relief bill for the Boyd family. This legislation will clarify the status of Joseph Samuel Boyd as a public safety officer for purposes of payment of death benefits by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA). Joseph Boyd, the dedicated and highly decorated Rangemaster for the Santa Ana Police Department (SAPD), tragically died on-duty while testing an illegal firearm.

I wholeheartedly support awarding the Boyd family death benefits under the Public Safety Officers' Benefit Program due to the contributions Rangemaster Boyd made to the Santa Ana Police Department and our community. Joe Boyd was not only a committed husband and father, he was a critical component of the Santa Ana police force.

In 1995, the Bureau of Justice Assistance awarded SAPD a grant under the Firearms Trafficking Program. The Santa Ana firearms program, along with the Santa Ana Weapons Inspection Team (WIT) has developed into one of the nation's premiere firearms trafficking programs as a result of this grant. Joe was