

FRANCIS FRANCOIS, A DEDICATED  
PUBLIC SERVANT

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 4, 1999*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the retirement of Francis B. Francois; Executive Director of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

Mr. Francois will retire in February after 19 years with AASHTO. In addition, during his tenure he also served on the Executive Committee of the Transportation Research Board.

Francis Francois was born and raised on an Iowa farm and earned an engineering degree at Iowa State University and then went on to earn a law degree at the George Washington University. A registered patent attorney, Mr. Francois resides in Bowie, MD with his wife Eileen where they have raised five children.

Known as a skilled parliamentarian, Mr. Francois served 18 years as an elected official in Prince George's County including nine as a County Councilman. While serving the County, Mr. Francois was a member of many boards and associations including the National Association of Counties and the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Washington Area Transit Authority. Having the vision for a regional approach to solving problems, he earned the reputation of being "Mr. Goodwrench" and "Mr. Fixit."

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Francois is a person dedicated to solving problems, serving people and setting plans in motion. In 1973, Mr. Francois was named "Washingtonian of the Year" by the Washingtonian magazine. He is also well published on such topics as the important role of counties in state government, urban water resources and the responsibility of regional decisionmaking.

Mr. Francois will be missed by AASHTO as well as the people of Prince George's County. Mr. Francois has the vision of an all-purpose reformer. I know my colleagues will join with me in congratulating Francis Francois and his family on his retirement and wishing them all the best as Mr. Francois enters what we all hope will be his most exciting adventures to date.

EDUCATION STANDARDS

**HON. BOB SCHAFFER**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 4, 1999*

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the November elections and impeachment trial have overshadowed a little-known victory for Colorado schools. Congress succeeded in blocking the president's efforts to consolidate national education standards and testing for local schools under the authority of the federal government.

Many parents and educators have been concerned about federalizing education measurements, content, and curriculum since the inception of Goals 2000 in 1994. While the need for standards and accountability is clear, concerns arise when one considers who will set the standards.

Under Goals 2000 legislation, unelected Washington bureaucrats set the standards. Although we hope the government will come up with reasonable and fair education benchmarks, in reality, there are big differences between what Washington experts prescribe and what parents want their kids to be taught.

This dilemma is no better illustrated than in the case of the National History Standards already developed under Goals 2000. Initial standards for American history did not mention some of the most prominent figures of American history including Paul Revere, the Wright Brothers, or George Washington's presidency. They did, however, encourage the study of Mansa Musa, a West African king in the 14th Century.

Not surprisingly, the standards were unduly critical of capitalism and our European founders. Even members of the Clinton administration and the press found the standards objectionable. The standards have subsequently been revised.

Placing government in charge of standards is certain to include not only content requirements—the who, what, where, why, and how of history, science, math and so on—but also subjective standards such as "students must demonstrate high order thinking or appreciate diversity." Suppose students are held to a standard which defies lessons their parents have taught them? What if teachers are forced to teach what they know to be false or counterproductive? Will government curricula replace that which locally elected school boards have chosen?

If adopted, national education priorities will reflect not the community nor parental values, but those of Washington. Given the atmosphere of political and pervasive corruption in Washington, can we afford such influence in our classrooms?

Clearly, standards of behavior and content must be established and enforced at the state and local level by those who are directly elected and accountable to parents and the community. Federal cooption must give way to increased parental authority. Parents must insist lessons and reading materials state facts and relate values they know to be true. They should vote for school board members who hold their convictions and parents should attend board meetings to stay connected to the process.

The authority of parents to direct their children's education remains threatened however, at least until zeal for federalization is extinguished. The 105th Congress voted to keep education standards in hands of parents and the community last year. Congress must continue to stand up for the freedom of local teachers to teach, and the liberty of our children to learn.

SYRACUSE SERVED BY INTRODUCTION OF "NEW NEWSPAPER" 100 YEARS AGO

**HON. JAMES T. WALSH**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, February 4, 1999*

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, one century ago, on January 1, 1899, Central New Yorkers were treated to a new newspaper, The Post-Standard. That paper, one of a half-dozen at

the time, remains today. Now it is one of two papers, and the only morning newspaper. I want to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the management and staff at this important milestone.

In particular, I would like to congratulate the top management, Mr. Stephen Rogers and Mr. Stephen A. Rogers, the President and Publisher respectively, for their well-known civic leadership and faithful adherence to the best of principles of journalism in the United States.

With the stewardship of a newspaper comes an important and historic responsibility. In the attached editorial, it is mentioned that a newspaper must be profitable to survive. But the newspaper must be sensitive to its special status in our nation's history. It is protected mightily by the First Amendment, and its right to print news and opinion without fear of retribution from any governmental quarter is unique in the world.

Though we in this body are often at odds with newspapers, we know their value and we know they represent a fundamental tenet of freedom. I have included the attached editorial, which appeared January 1 this year, commemorating the centennial recognition of The Post-Standard.

"CENTENNIAL POST: Your morning paper is 100 today, still pursuing much the same mission. 'A legitimate primary aim of the newspaper is to make money.'

Thus read the editorial that appeared in the inaugural edition of The Post-Standard 100 years ago today. The principle remains true today. As the editorial noted, quoting an editor-senator from Rhode Island: 'A paper that cannot support itself cannot be any service . . . to spend money upon it is like wasting fuel in an attempt to kindle a store.'"

The Post-Standard boasts a tradition that extends back more than a century—to The Post, which traces its origins to 1894, and The Standard, dating to 1829, decades before the founding of the City of Syracuse. The consolidation of the two newspapers was described as a victory over 'factionalism' in Onondaga County and the ascendancy of 'a Republican newspaper, dedicated to the public weal along Republican lines, and representing a united Republicanism.'

That partisan bias reflects an earlier era in newspaper publishing when journals were closely allied with parties and candidates. Most newspapers, including The Post-Standard, have long since declared their independence from rigid party orthodoxy, endorsing candidates based on their qualifications, performance and prospects rather than political affiliation. Of course, The Post-Standard continues to represent a region long known as a bastion of Republican fervor.

Although the mission of The Post-Standard through the years has included some hard truth-telling, its editorial page since the beginning has attempted to build and strengthen the community. 'The Post-Standard deems the blessings of life and of work too precious to be frittered away in perpetual contention and fault-finding,' wrote the editor in 1899. 'To prove itself a cheery presence, seeking to say good of men and things always when it can, and consenting to say ill only when it must, shall be this newspaper's consistent aim.'

Hewing to that aim is no easier today than in 1899. There never seems to be a shortage of rascals, ludicrous schemes and conspiracies afoot, no less in the Age of McKinley than the Age of Bill and Monica.

Yet there is something uplifting and inspiring in the long-ago editor's aspiration for his paper to 'preach the gospel of