

I wish continued happiness for this wonderful couple. My state, my community and my family are better for Fletcher and Sybil Sullards.

INTRODUCTION OF FEDERALLY IMPACTED SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleague, Congressman J.D. HAYWORTH, in introducing the Federally Impacted School Improvement Act. This legislation is designed to provide matching grants to federally impacted schools to meet their urgent repair and construction needs.

The Impact Aid program was built on the premise of a shared responsibility between the federal, state and local governments. Since 1950, the federal government has recognized and accepted its responsibility to assist school districts and communities that are impacted by a federal presence such as a military base or Indian reservation. The federal government has made payments to school districts in the form of federal property, disability and basic support payments to help cover the cost of educating federally connected children. Across the country, 1,600 school districts and 1.5 million children depend on the Impact Aid program for a quality education.

Up until 1994, Congress has provided assistance to help these school districts build and repair their schools, particularly districts whose property tax circumstances make it almost impossible to pass school construction bonds. Since 1994, however, the Impact Aid school construction account has suffered. The funding provided in the section 8007 construction account has become woefully inadequate and is spread too thinly among the over two hundred qualifying schools. As a result, many of these school buildings are antiquated, overcrowded and most troubling, compromise the health and safety of their students.

I would like to draw my colleagues' attention to two particular instances in my state where Impact Aid section 8007 construction funding has fallen far short of meeting schools' most basic repair and construction needs. The Grand Forks school district in North Dakota has been plagued by severe ventilation and air quality problems for some time. The meager funds Grand Forks receives through section 8007 have not enabled the district to make even urgent repairs. One school has had to delay renovation projects because of insufficient funds, and ultimately, to borrow from their Basic Support Payments when renovation needs became too urgent to ignore. In order to improve the air quality so that children are not at risk, this one school would need \$800,000. However, the entire Grand Forks school district will receive only \$40,000 in section 8007 money this year.

Another Impact Aid school that has become a particular concern for me is Cannonball Elementary, located on the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota. As a result of inadequate Impact Aid construction funding over the years, Cannonball has long been neglected. Storage rooms have been converted

to makeshift classrooms and portions of the building that have been condemned continue to house students. Students and teachers are often forced to move from classroom to classroom to escape the stench of sewer back-up that permeates the building. I have walked the halls of this school and have found the conditions these students face on a day-to-day basis to be deplorable.

The legislation we are introducing today offers the best opportunity for Cannonball, and the Grand Forks School District to meet these urgent construction needs. Our legislation would create a separate Impact Aid construction account and authorize a federal appropriation of \$50 million for each of the next five fiscal years. The funding would be divided equally between Indian land/federal property and military schools and would create a reserve account for emergency repair needs. Under the legislation, an individual school district could receive a grant up to \$3 million any time during the five year authorization period. In order to make the limited federal funds go farther, the bill targets funding directly to those school districts located on Federal property or that serve a high concentration of federally-connected students. Additionally, the bill requires districts to provide matching funds on all but the small portion of funds reserved for emergencies.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has a clear obligation to federally impacted schools, and only by stepping up its support can these schools continue to provide a quality education to thousands of children across the country. I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on a bipartisan basis to support Impact Aid schools. I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation, which would enable federally impacted schools across the country to meet their urgent construction and repair needs.

HONORING KEITH LUND AS A "STAR OF LIFE"

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I commend Keith Lund for being designated as a "Star of Life" by the American Ambulance Association.

Keith's selection as the "Star of Life" Award winner for Dade, Broward, Monroe and Palm Beach Counties of Florida is an appropriate honor for such a dedicated paramedic. Keith has worked with American Medical Response for eight years, rising from an emergency medical technician to a paramedic and supervising officer.

Anyone who has been in an emergency situation can easily recognize the vital importance of a calm, direct manner and the ability to work as a team member. Keith Lund embodies these to near-perfection. He handles his daily work in the high-stress environment as a critical care paramedic with eagerness, diligence, and pride.

I believe it is exceedingly difficult to separate professional life and personal life. This is an especially complicated task for a single parent. As a single father, Keith's dedication to his job is balanced with his dedication to his son. Keith's commitment to both should be honored and admired.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join with me in honoring the 150 emergency medical professionals being honored as "Stars of Life" during National EMS Week of 1999. I commend Keith Lund for his dedication to emergency care for the people of South Florida as a true "Star of Life".

U.S.-TAIWAN RELATIONS

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of President Lee Teng-Hui and Vice-President Lien Chan of Taiwan as they prepare to celebrate their anniversary in office this May 20th. We are reminded once again that we have a strong partner and friend in the Far East—The Republic of China on Taiwan.

Throughout its history, the Republic of China on Taiwan has always continued to foster good relations with the United States. Many of Taiwan's leaders were either educated in the United States or the United Kingdom and they, just as much as we do, believe in democracy and a free enterprise system.

In the future, I hope we can continue to work together on issues that are mutual beneficial to both countries in the areas of democracy and governance, the rule of law, international trade and the environment. Taiwan has always supported the United States in many areas as it relates to security in and outside of the region. I hope we can continue to do this. It is time we show our appreciation of Taiwan by offering our help to them when they need us.

IN SPECIAL RECOGNITION OF GEOFFREY L. EARNHART ON HIS APPOINTMENT TO ATTEND THE U.S. MILITARY ACADEMY

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a truly outstanding young man from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Recently, I had the opportunity to nominate Geoffrey L. Earnhart for an appointment to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York.

I am pleased to announce that Geoff has been offered an appointment and will be attending West Point with the incoming cadet class of 2003. Attending one of our nation's military academies is one of the most rewarding and demanding time periods these young men and women will ever undertake. Our military academics turn these young adults into the finest officers in the world.

Mr. Speaker, without question, Geoff belongs with the incoming West Point class of 2003. During his time at St. Francis DeSales High School, in Perryburg, Ohio, Geoff has achieved a remarkable grade point average of 4.427, which currently ranks him tenth in his class of 178 students. Geoff is a three-year member of the National Honor Society, and has received many awards for his academic excellence.