

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

DRUG COVERAGE MEANS EXTRA COST

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues an excellent editorial pointing out the need for realistic premiums to cover the additional cost that would result from including prescription drugs under Medicare coverage which appeared in the Norfolk (Nebraska) Daily News, on June 11, 1999.

[From the Norfolk Daily News, June 11, 1999]

DRUG COVERAGE MEANS EXTRA COST PRESIDENT HAS A PLAN FOR INCLUDING PRESCRIPTIONS UNDER MEDICARE PROGRAM

President Clinton believes he has a plan for including prescription drugs under Medicare coverage that is superior to the one suggested by the co-chairmen of his 17-member advisory commission. The latter plan advanced by Sen. John Breaux, D-La., and Rep. Bill Thomas, R-Calif., would provide the elderly participants under Medicare with a fixed amount for purchasing either a public or private health plan, which could include expenses for prescription drugs.

That had the advantage of simplicity, but a political disadvantage of not providing opportunity for presidents and members of Congress to get credit for periodic improvement of all kinds of health care benefits.

The Clinton plan, promised to be presented in detail later this month, proposes drug coverage for Medicare beneficiaries through the payment of an extra premium. It was predicted as being as low as \$10 a month and certainly less than \$25 a month.

In either event, it would be relatively cheap coverage, and appealing to those now covered by this government program whereby Social Security beneficiaries pay a \$45.50 premium for health insurance. Inclusion of drugs in the program will boost costs, though White House advisers claim they will be offset by reducing hospital admissions and nursing homes, and reduce the need for home health care. The question is: Who will pay?

Today's wage-earners should not be saddled with extra payroll taxes to provide this new coverage; neither should employers who are partners in paying the payroll taxes.

The problems with future solvency for the systems that provide Social Security retirement and Medicare arise from a political inability to fix benefit limits. Any expansion of benefits—especially for prescription drugs—must be accompanied by a sound program by which those who are served share the extra expense.

Using a federal surplus—which accumulates because Americans are already taxed too heavily—to expand government benefits is a politically devious way to resolve solvency problems of a program already destined for insolvency on its present path.

Better coverage will cost more; and those costs ought to be paid largely through realistic premiums for those who wish and can afford the extras.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE EARLY ACCESS ACT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, as this Congress debates Medicare reform, we need to ask ourselves what kind of reform do we want? Is Medicare a program that has worked for our nation's seniors? Is it something we should build upon or is it something we should tear down and start over?

I stand here today with 80 of my colleagues to say that Medicare is a program that works and that can and should be improved. In that vein, we are introducing the Medicare Early Access Act, legislation that was first introduced in the last Congress with the support of President Clinton. Rather than raise the eligibility age of Medicare like some in this Congress would seek to do, this bill would expand access to Medicare's purchasing power to certain individuals below age 65.

The Medicare Early Access Act is self-financed, through enrollees' premiums; it is not a publicly financed program. It simply would enable eligible individuals to harness Medicare's clout in the marketplace to get much more affordable health coverage than they are able to purchase in the private sector market that currently exists.

The bill would provide a very vulnerable population (age 55–64) with three new options to obtain health insurance:

Individuals 62–65 years old with no access to health insurance could buy into Medicare by paying a base premium (about \$300 a month) during those pre-Medicare eligibility years and a deferred premium (per month, about \$16 for each year of participation in the early access program) during their post-65 Medicare enrollment. The deferred premium is designed to reimburse the early access program for the extra costs for the sicker than average enrollees. It would be payable out of the enrollee's Social Security check between the ages of 65–85.

Individuals 55–62 years old who have been laid off and have no access to health insurance, as well as their spouse, could buy into Medicare by paying a monthly premium (about \$400 a month). There would be no deferred premium. Certain eligibility requirements would apply.

Retirees aged 55 or older whose employer-sponsored coverage is terminated could buy into their employer's health insurance for active workers at 125 percent of the group rate. This would be a COBRA expansion, with no relationship to Medicare.

Through these changes, the Medicare Early Access Act would provide health insurance for some 400,000 people at a vulnerable point in their lives when the current health care marketplace is leaving them out. These are not people whom the current health care marketplace is scrambling to cover. Insurance com-

panies don't want them and we are increasingly seeing employers drop coverage as well. It is time for the federal government to step forward and solve the problem of diminishing access for early retirees and workers who simply cannot buy adequate insurance in the private market.

In addition, the Medicare Early Access Act has only a small start-up cost that is fully financed through companion legislation to curb waste, fraud and abuse in Medicare that I am concurrently introducing today. In this way, we will expand coverage options to people between the ages of 55 and 64 at no cost to the American taxpayer.

The Medicare Early Access Act isn't the total solution for people age 55–64 who lack access to health insurance coverage. However, if passed, it would make available health insurance options for these individuals at much less than the cost of what is available today. This is a meaningful step forward in expanding health insurance coverage to a segment of our population that is quickly losing coverage in the private sector. It is a solution that has no cost to the federal government. The Medicare Early Access Act is legislation that we should be able to agree upon and to enact so that people age 55–64 have a viable option for health insurance coverage.

A more detailed summary of the Medicare Early Access Act follows:

MEDICARE EARLY ACCESS ACT OF 1999 SUMMARY

TITLE: HELP FOR PEOPLE AGED 62 TO 65

Sixty-two to sixty-five year olds without health insurance may buy into Medicare by paying monthly premiums and repaying any extra costs to Medicare through deferred premiums between ages 65 to 85.

Starting July, 2000, the full range of Medicare benefits (Part A & B and Medicare+Choice plans) may be bought by an individual between 62–65 who has earned enough quarters of coverage to be eligible for Medicare at age 65 and who has no health insurance under a public plan or a group plan. (The individual does not need to have exhausted any employer COBRA eligibility).

A person may continue to buy-into Medicare even if they subsequently become eligible for an employer group health plan or public plan. Individuals move into regular Medicare at age 65.

Financing: Enrollees must pay premiums. Premiums are divided into two parts:

(1) Base Premiums of about \$300 a month payable during months of enrollment between 62 to 65, which will be adjusted for inflation and will vary a little by differences in the cost of health care in various geographic regions, and

(2) Deferred Premiums which will be payable between age 65–85, and which are initially estimated to be about \$16 per month for each year or part of a year that a person chooses to enroll between age 62–65. For example, if one enrolls for only two years, the Deferred Premium will be roughly \$32/month [2 x \$16] between age 65–85. The Deferred Premium will be paid like the current Part B premium, i.e., out of one's Social Security check.

Note, the Base Premium will be adjusted from year to year to reflect changing costs

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

(and individuals will be told that number each year before they choose to enroll), but the 20 year Deferred Premium will not change from the dollar figure that the beneficiary is told when they first enroll between 62-65—they will be able to count on a specific dollar deferred payment figure.

The Base Premium equals the premium that would be necessary to cover all costs if all 62-65 year olds enrolled in the program. The Deferred Premium repays Medicare for the fact that not all will enroll, but that many sicker than average people are likely to voluntarily enroll. The Deferred Premiums ensure that the program is eventually fully financed over roughly 20 years. Savings from the anti-fraud proposals (introduced separately) finance the start-up of the program and protect the existing Medicare program against any loss (see Title IV).

TITLE II: HELP FOR 55 TO 62 YEAR OLDS WHO LOSE THEIR JOBS

55-62 year olds who are eligible for unemployment insurance (and their uninsured spouses) may buy into Medicare through a premium.

The full range of Medicare benefits may be bought by an individual between 55-62 who:

- (1) has earned enough quarters of coverage to be eligible for Medicare at age 65,
- (2) is eligible for unemployment insurance,
- (3) before lay-off had a year-plus of employment-based health insurance, and
- (4) because of the unemployment no longer has such coverage or eligibility for COBRA coverage.

A worker's spouse who meets the above conditions (except for UI eligibility) and is younger than 62 may also buy-in (even if younger than 55).

The worker and spouse must terminate buy-in if they become eligible for other types of insurance, but if the conditions listed above reoccur, they are eligible to buy-in again. At age 62 they must terminate and can convert to the Title I program. Non-payment of premiums is also cause for termination.

There is a single monthly premium roughly equal to \$400 that will be adjusted for inflation. It must be paid during the time of buy-in; there is no Deferred Premium. This premium is set to recover base costs plus some of the costs created by the likely enrollment of sicker than average people. The rest of the costs to Medicare are repaid by the anti-fraud provisions (see Title IV).

TITLE III: HELP FOR WORKERS 55+ WHOSE RETIREE BENEFITS ARE TERMINATED

Workers age 55+ whose retirement health insurance is terminated by their employer may buy into their employer's health insurance for active workers at 125% of the group rate (this is an extension of COBRA health continuation coverage—not a Medicare Program).

This title is an expansion of the COBRA health continuation benefits program. If a worker and dependents have relied on a company retiree health benefit plan, and that protection is terminated or substantially slashed during his or her retirement, but the company continues a health plan for its active workers, then the retiree may buy-into the company's group health plan at 125% of cost.

TITLE IV: FINANCING

Titles I & II of the Early Access to Medicare Act are totally financed. Title III is not a Medicare or public program.

The existing Medicare program is protected by placing these programs in their own trust fund. The Medicare Trustees will monitor the program to ensure that it is self-financing and does not in any way burden the existing Medicare program.

Most of the cost is paid by the enrollees' premiums.

Payment of Start Up Costs: While the Deferred Premiums are being collected and for any costs not covered by premiums, a package of Medicare anti-fraud, waste, and abuse provisions has been introduced as a separate bill, the Medicare Fraud and Overpayment Act of 1999. This bill provides for a number of reforms, including:

- (1) improvements in the Medicare Secondary Payment provisions,
- (2) a reduction in Medicare's reimbursement for the drug EPO used with kidney dialysis so that Medicare is not paying much more than the dialysis centers are buying the drug for;
- (3) Medicare payment for pharmaceuticals, biologicals, or parenteral nutrients on the basis of actual acquisition cost rather than the average wholesale price which is often far above the price at which the drug can really be purchased,
- (4) setting quality standards for the partial hospitalization mental health benefit, so as to weed out unqualified, abusive providers, and
- (5) allowing Medicare to get a volume discount by contracting with Centers of Excellence for high volumes of complex operations at hospitals which have better than average outcomes.

TRIBUTE TO THE 1999 NOKOMIS HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate the 1999 Nokomis High School Girls Basketball team for winning the Illinois Class "A" State Title for the second straight year.

The team members are Jessica Aherin, Dee Eck, Bernadette Marty, Ashlee Keller, Va'Nicia Waterman, Lora Ruppert, Lyndsay Stauder, Heather Swanson Hayes, Janice Spears, Bonnie Meiners, Carrie Eisenbarth, Rochelle Detmers, Kassie Engelhart, Emily Heck, Jessie Hough, manager Tisha Morris and Head Coach Maury Hough.

I congratulate these young athletes and the people who were there to support them throughout this memorable season. The teamwork needed for this victory was not only seen on the court, but through the support and love of families and friends of the Nokomis High Girls Basketball team.

A TRIBUTE TO PATRICK KOSKE-MCBRIDE AND IRENE SORENSON

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine achievement of Patrick Koske-McBride, an eighth grade student from Home Street Middle School in Bishop, CA. Patrick was a recent competitor in the National History Day Competition (June 13-17) at the University of Maryland. The competition involved students from

across the United States who submitted projects on this year's theme: "Science, Technology, Invention in History"

Patrick qualified for the national competition by first winning California State History Day competitions at the county and state levels. His essay, "Evolution, an Idea of Change: How Darwin's Theory of Evolution Impacted Our World," investigated Darwin's life, his writings and the impact those writings have had on science, religion and society.

Patrick's outstanding accomplishments were undoubtedly guided by the leadership of his teacher, Mrs. Irene Sorenson. Irene is a past winner of the Richard Farrell Award from the National History Day as the 1996 Teacher of Merit. Also in 1995, 1996 and 1998, Irene has sent students to the national competition. Clearly, the dedication of young students like Patrick, and the guidance of teachers like Irene Sorenson, make our public school system the finest in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and our colleagues in recognizing Patrick Koske-McBride for his fine accomplishment. To say the least, his fine work is admired by all of us. I'd also like to commend Irene Sorenson for her fine leadership and her devotion to such remarkable educational standards. Students like Patrick and instructors like Irene set a fine example for us all and it is only appropriate that the House pay tribute to them both today.

ELIZABETH BURKE

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Ms. Elizabeth Burke, one of my constituents who has been chosen as one of the Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leaders for 1999.

Each year, the Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leadership Program recognizes ten individuals as Community Health Leaders for their efforts to provide better health care to communities which have historically been underserved. Community Health Leaders each receive \$5,000 personal stipends as well as \$95,000 in program support to finance their continued efforts to improve public health in their communities.

Ms. Burke will be recognized for her efforts to provide a comprehensive response to victims of domestic violence in the Greater Pittsburgh metropolitan area. Ms. Burke has worked as the Medical and Domestic Violence Advocate of the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh to ensure that women who have been abused receive the medical care, prevention assistance, and other services that they need to end violent domestic situations.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Ms. Burke for her efforts in this important cause, and I congratulate her on her selection as one of the Robert Wood Johnson Community Health Leaders for 1999.

A HALLMARK OF A GREAT
PERSON IN THEIR GENEROSITY**HON. DON YOUNG**

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today we honor a truly great Alaskan: Mrs. Maxine Whitney. Mrs. Whitney is a long time Fairbanks, Alaska resident who, with her husband, Jesse, and their construction companies, helped develop and build the infrastructure of modern day Alaska. While pursuing a very active business life, Mrs. Whitney collected what was reportedly the world's largest private collection of Native Alaskan art and artifacts. As with many, her avocation became a vocation and she purchased a small private museum. Mrs. Whitney successfully ran the Eskimo Museum in Fairbanks for almost 20 years, from 1969 until the late 1980's. Throughout her 50 plus years in Alaska, Mrs. Whitney traveled extensively in rural Alaska gaining a deep understanding and appreciation of Native peoples and cultures. Her museum and collection shows intimate knowledge of Native Alaskan prehistory, history, and the importance of the Native contribution to Alaskan society.

Mrs. Whitney has provided a legacy for all Alaskans and for all Americans. Maxine Whitney recently donated this world-renowned collection to Prince William Sound Community College in Valdez, Alaska, part of the University of Alaska system. The collection is known as the Jesse & Maxine Whitney Collection and is the nucleus of the Prince William Sound Community College—Alaska Cultural Center. This multi-million dollar donation will provide opportunities for people to learn about past and present Native Alaskan cultures and the natural history of Alaska. In donating the Whitney Collection, Mrs. Whitney has provided an educational gem for all who visit and view the collection.

This gift should be celebrated and Mrs. Whitney commended for her extreme generosity to the State of Alaska and the USA. Her legacy will enhance the knowledge and appreciation of Native cultures across the country. It is people like Maxine Whitney, patrons of the arts and education, philanthropists, who enrich our lives with their precious gifts. Mrs. Whitney, thank you.

TRIBUTE TO BIRCHWOOD SCHOOL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my sincerest congratulations to the students of Birchwood School in Cleveland, OH who won at the local and state levels of the National History Day competition. These students are now competing at the national level.

National History Day is a program for students to study and learn about historical issues, ideas, and events. It is a program that allows students to academically excel and gain intellectual growth throughout the year. During the year students develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. The theme for 1999 is "Science, Technology, Invention in

History: Impact, Influence, Change." After analyzing and interpreting their information on the topic, the students then present their findings in papers, exhibits, performances and media presentations that are evaluated by historians and educators.

The following 15 students placed in the top two spots at the state competition and are participating in the national competition this week. They either worked individually or in groups: Patrick Costilow, Henna Gn, Nancy Brubaker, Jacob Stofan, Katie Tropp, Elyse Meena, Grace Hsieh, Christy Kufahi, Joanna West, Benjamin Wong, Samuel Chai, Imran Farooqi, Paul Ibrahim, Joseph Grabo, Richard Yurko.

These students have dedicated a substantial portion of their time on their projects. It was an intense year for the students at Birchwood School, but their hard work and motivation have paid off. They placed at the top at local and state awards and are now on their way to winning the nationals.

I would like to express my congratulations to the 15 students at Birchwood School for their achievements at local and state level competitions and I wish them luck in the national competition. Birchwood School should be proud of the 15 students for their accomplishments. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating all those involved for a job well done.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on rolcall No. 204, my plane was delayed due to bad weather. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

JESUS C. TOVES, 1998 NCIS CIVILIAN
EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR**HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD**

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak about a deserving individual who has been named the Naval Criminal Investigative Service's 1998 Civilian Employee of the Year. Over 40 Resident Agencies, falling under 13 NCIS field offices, nominate individuals who have distinguished themselves as among the very best in their performance and character as candidates for this annual award. The headquarters here in Washington, DC, makes the final selection. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to announce that this year's NCIS Civilian Employee of the Year, Jesus S. Toves—a contemporary of mine and a former high school classmate.

Jess, as he is better known, was born on Guam on December 12, 1945. A product of the island's public school system, he is a member of the John F. Kennedy High School Class of 1965. After graduation, Jess enlisted in the United States Air Force. His outstanding performance while stationed at Okinawa, the Philippines, Las Vegas, California, and Thailand, earned him various awards including the

Air Force Meritorious Service Medal, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and the Air Force Achievement Medal. After serving for twenty-five years, he retired with the rank of Master Sergeant.

In 1992, Jess joined the NCIS as an investigative assistant. His Air Force service proved to be a great asset to him and the NCIS. Jess exceeded all expectations and he became an integral part of office operations. During a time of high turnover within the Special Agents Corps on Guam, Jess almost single-handedly kept continuity in the office's administrative functions.

The Naval Criminal Investigative Service is a worldwide Federal law enforcement organization composed of civilians charged to "protect and serve" the Navy and the Marine Corps through a number of law enforcement and counter intelligence services. The Agency's Civilian of the Year Award is the highest honor bestowed upon an NCIS employee who is not a special agent. This is why this award is so special and this is why I am very proud of Jess.

I join his wife, Carmen, and his five daughters in applauding his accomplishments. Congratulations, Jess Toves, for having been chosen 1998 NCIS Civilian of the Year.

ROSA PARKS CONGRESSIONAL
GOLD MEDAL**HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I am proud and honored to be a part of this effort to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Ms. Rosa Parks.

Ms. Parks is a hero to the Nation because of a simple act of defiance. She refused to give up her bus seat in the "colored" section to a white passenger after a long day at work on December 1, 1955. At that time, segregated institutions were accepted as the way of life in Montgomery, AL, and throughout the South. Yet, this day was different. The weary Ms. Parks, on her way home from a department store where she was employed as an assistant tailor, decided that her rights as a human being—in this case the right to rest her tired feet—were the same as anybody else's, regardless of her color.

Ms. Parks probably did not consider her actions extraordinary. After being arrested and then being released on bail, Rosa Parks agreed to allow her attorney to use her case as the focus for a struggle against the system of segregation. In December of 1956—just 1 year later—the Supreme Court ruled the segregation of buses in Montgomery, AL, unlawful. Through her single act of civil disobedience, Rosa Parks triggered a monumental movement in America for both civil and human rights.

Because of her personal conviction, Rosa Parks is a true hero, not a glamorized figure on a pedestal that our society often promotes, but just an ordinary citizen with extraordinary courage. She serves as a living example to us all that someone has to take a stand for what is right, even if it means taking the risk of being inconvenienced. I am particularly pleased that we are honoring her, not posthumously, but while she still can "smell her roses."

EXPRESSING CONGRATULATIONS
TO ROSA PARKS

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today we honor Rosa Parks for her heroic acts that helped change race relations forever in this country. She lit a fire under the civil rights movement when on December 1, 1955 she bravely refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. Many other people were instrumental in the struggle, but her act of defiance of an unjust segregation law visibly rallied people together and helped change our nation.

Congress is awarding Mrs. Parks a Gold Medal because we are proud that she stood up for what was right and set in motion the chain of events which ultimately led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which ensured that all black Americans had the right to equal treatment under the law with white Americans.

We are proud that her arrest rallied people against segregation in a year-long bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama that finally ended when the Supreme Court ruled that segregation of transportation was illegal.

Several years ago in Richmond, Calif., in my congressional district, I had the privilege to join with the Richmond NAACP to honor Rosa Parks at its annual dinner. She passed on her powerful story to younger generations of Americans who are working every day to achieve racial justice America.

This medal we bestow upon Mrs. Parks sends an important message not just about the history of the civil rights movement but about the struggles that our society faces today. The Gold Medal for Rosa Parks, I hope, is a message to all Americans to have the courage of your convictions and to stand up—or to sit down, whichever may be more appropriate—for what you believe is right. As Mrs. Parks wrote in her memoir, “our mistreatment was just not right, and I was sick of it.”

More than forty years after Mrs. Parks' arrest, despite significant improvements, racial divisions are still strong. They show up in all elements of society and are still reflected in the huge gaps between blacks and white in income and employment, in health and in educational achievement. Progress is being made, to be sure, but it is slow. These gaps should be intolerable to all Americans, not just to those who must suffer their consequences. Most recently, many of my colleagues here have also correctly denounced the practice of profiling, where police officers stop black motorists for no other reason than they fit the profile that the police have decided fits that of a criminal. Profiling is being challenged as violation of these motorists civil rights and this practice should indeed be brought to an abrupt halt.

As we thank Rosa Parks and honor her with a Congressional medal, we must also dedicate ourselves to carry out her dream of a just and tolerant society. Her bold action inspired thousands of Americans to join together to demand change. It should still inspire us to make our society a more just and humane place.

Many people have commemorated the courageous action of Rosa Parks, including the popular and very talented group, The Nevill

Brothers, who wrote a tribute to her. I could not agree with them more when they sing.

Thank you Miss Rosa
You were the spark
That started our freedom movement,
Thank you Sister Rosa Parks.

INTRODUCTION OF HEALTH INSURANCE FOR AMERICANS ACT OF 1999: LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE REFUNDABLE TAX CREDITS FOR THE PURCHASE OF HEALTH INSURANCE THROUGH A FEHBP-TYPE POOLING ARRANGEMENT

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the biggest social problem facing America today is that one in six of our fellow citizens have no health insurance and are all too often unable to afford health care.

About 44 million Americans have no health insurance. Despite the unprecedented good economic times, the number of uninsured is rising about 100,000 a month. It is unimaginable what will happen if and when the economy slows and turns down. One health research group, the National Coalition on Health Care, has estimated that with rising health insurance costs and an economic downturn, the number of uninsured in the year 2009 would be about 61.4 million.

The level of un-insurance among some groups is even higher. For example, in California it is estimated that nearly 40% of the Hispanic community is uninsured.

An article by Robert Kuttner in the January 14, 1999 New England Journal of Medicine entitled “The American Health Care System,” describes the problem well: “The most prominent feature of American health insurance coverage is its slow erosion, even as the government seeks to plug the gaps in coverage through such new programs as Medicare+Choice, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), expansions of state Medicaid programs, and the \$24 billion Children's Health Insurance Program of 1997. Despite these efforts, the proportion of Americans without insurance increased from 14.2% in 1995 to 15.3% in 1996 and to 16.1% in 1997, when 43.4 million people were uninsured. Not as well appreciated is the fact that the number of people who are under-insured, and thus must either pay out of pocket or forgo medical care, is growing even faster.”

Does it matter whether people have health insurance? Of course it does. No health insurance all too often means important health care foregone, with a minor sickness turning into a major, expensive illness, or a warning sign ignored until it is fatal. Lack of insurance is a major cause of personal bankruptcy. It has forced us to develop a crazy, Rube Goldberg system of cross-subsidies to keep the ‘safety net’ hospital providers afloat.

Mr. Speaker, what is wrong with us? No other modern, industrialized nation fails to insure all its people. I don't believe we are incompetent, but our failure to provide basic health insurance to all our citizens is a national disgrace.

Personally, I would like to see all Americans have health insurance through an expansion

of Medicare to everyone. I am also a co-sponsor of Rep. McDERMOTT's single payer type program, which is modeled on Canada's success in insuring all its people for about 30% less than we spend to insure only 84% of our citizens.

But these efforts are not likely to succeed in an conservative Congress or in a closely-divided Congress.

Therefore, yesterday I introduced legislation, H.R. 2185, to try another approach—a refundable tax credit approach—which I believe can be made to work and which is similar to a number of bills recently introduced by various Republican members.

Unfortunately, many of these earlier tax credit bills don't work. They either throw money at people who already have health insurance (e.g., 100% tax deductions for health insurance for small employers), provide a pitiful amount of money that wouldn't buy a fig leaf of a policy (e.g., a \$500 credit bill), or if they do provide enough money, waste it by providing no ‘pool’ or ‘wholesale’ market and forcing people into the retail market where insurance companies take 20–30% off the top, refuse to insure the sick, and raise rates on older people so that the credit is woefully inadequate.

The failures in these bills can be addressed. I think my proposal solves many of these problems. The idea of a tax credit approach to ending the national disgrace of un-insurance is a new one, however, and we desperately need a series of detailed, thoughtful hearings to design a program that will provide real help and not waste scarce resources on middlemen.

The Health Insurance for Americans Act I introduced:

Provides in 2001 and thereafter a refundable tax credit of \$1200 per adult, \$600 per child, and \$3600 total per family. These amounts are adjusted for inflation at the same rate that the Federal government's plan for its employees (FEHBP) increases.

The credit is available to everyone who is not participating in a subsidized health plan or eligible for Medicare.

The credit may only be used to buy “qualified” health insurance, which is defined to be private insurance sold through a new HHS Office of Health Insurance (OHI) in the same general manner that Federal employees “buy” health insurance through the Office of Personnel Management.

Any insurer who wants to sell to Federal workers through FEHBP must also offer to sell one or more policies through OHI. OHI will hold an annual open enrollment period (similar to FEHBP's fall open enrollment) and insurers must sell a policy similar to that which they offer to Federal workers (but may also offer a zero premium policy), for which there is no pre-existing condition exclusion or waiting period, for which the premium and quality may be negotiated between the carrier and OHI, and which must be community-rated (i.e., it won't rise in price as individuals age).

Mr. Speaker, a refundable tax credit sounds like an easy idea, but as in all things in America's \$1.1 trillion health care system, there are some serious problems that have to be addressed.

The major problems with a refundable credit are:

(1) How to get the money to the uninsured in advance, so that the uninsured, who tend to

be lower income, can buy a policy without waiting for a refundable credit?

(2) How to make sure that the credit is spent on health insurance and there is no tax fraud?

I solve both of these problems through credit advances to insurers administered through OHI.

(3) How to limit the credit to those who are uninsured, and avoid encouraging employers and those buying private insurance on their own from substituting the credit for their current coverage?

By limiting the size of the credit, most people who have insurance through the workplace or are participating in public programs will want to continue with their current coverage. The credit is adequate to ensure a good health insurance plan, but most workers and employers will want to continue with the current system.

Having said this, there is no question that this credit is likely to erode gradually the employer-based system. It is hard to see employers wanting to offer new employees a health plan, when they can use this new public plan. Indeed, it is likely that an employer will say, "I will pay you more in salary if you will go use the tax credit program."

But is this bad? The employer-based health insurance system is an historical accident of wage controls during World War II where in lieu of higher wages, people were able to get health insurance as a fringe benefit. This system is collapsing. No one today would ever design from scratch such a system where your family's health care depended on where you worked. It is, frankly, probably good that this system would gradually erode—if there is something to replace it. The Health Insurance for Americans Act provides that replacement. To the extent that workers have better health care through their employer, the employer can continue to provide increased pay for the purchase of "supplemental" or "wrap-around" health benefits and can even help arrange such additional policies for their workers—and both workers and employers come out ahead.

The bill I am introducing does not force an overnight revolution in the employer-provided system. But the current system is dying, and my bill provides a transition to a new system in which employees will have individual choice of a wide range of insurers (instead of today's reality, where most employees are offered one plan and only one plan).

(4) How to make the credit effective by allowing the individual to buy "wholesale" or at group rates, rather than "retail" or individual rates?

(5) How to make sure that individual who most need health insurance—those who have been sick—are able to use the credit to obtain affordable insurance?

(6) How to minimize the problem created when the healthiest individuals take their credit and buy policies which are "good" for them (e.g., Medical Savings Accounts), but "bad" for society because they leave the sicker in a smaller, more expensive insurance pool (that is, how do we keep the insurance pool as large as possible and avoid segmentation and an 'insurance death' spiral)?

Again, the OHI/FEHBP idea largely solves these 3 problems, by giving individuals a forum where they can comparison shop for a variety of plans that meet the standards of the OHI and achieve efficiencies of scale and reduced overhead.

These questions are the single biggest problem facing the refundable credit proposal. Even if we are able to 'pool' the individuals, will insurers offer an affordable policy to a group which they may fear will have a disproportionate number of very sick individuals?

We may need to develop a national risk pool 'outlet' to take the expensive risks and subsidize them in a separate pool, so that the cost of premiums for most of the people using OHI is affordable. Another alternative, and probably the one that makes the most sense for society, is to mandate that individuals participate in the OHI pool (if they don't have similar levels of insurance elsewhere). Only by getting everyone to participate can we ensure a decent price by spreading the risk. The danger that young, healthy individuals will ignore (forego) the tax credit program may be serious enough that it will cause insurers to price the OHI policies too high, thus starting an insurance "death spiral" as healthier people refuse to participate and rates start rising to cover the costs of the shrinking pool of sicker-than-average individuals.

As I said earlier, the different Republican tax credit proposals fail to deal with these key questions and problems. But their bills have helped focus us on this national crisis. Through hearings and studies, I hope we can find ways to ensure that these technical—but very important questions—are addressed.

There is one key, monstrous question left: how to pay for the refundable credit so we may end the national disgrace of 44 million uninsured?

I have not addressed this issue in the bill, but am willing to offer a number of options. I would like to see the temporary budget surpluses used to start this program—but those surpluses are temporary and we need a permanent financing source.

The problem of the uninsured is largely due to the fact that many business refuse or are unable to provide health insurance to their workers. The fairest way to finance this program would be a tax on businesses which do not provide an equivalent amount of insurance to their workers. Such a tax, of course, would slow the tendency of this program to encourage businesses to drop coverage. Since many small businesses could not afford the tax, we will need to subsidize them.

Another approach would be to apply the next minimum wage increase to the payment of health insurance premiums by those firms which do not offer insurance. A 50 cent per hour minimum wage increase dedicated to health insurance would pay most of an individual's premium.

Other financing sources could be a provider and insurer surtax, since these groups will no longer need to be subsidize the uninsured and will be receiving tens of billions in additional income. Finally, to end the national disgrace of un-insurance, a small national sales or VAT tax would be in order.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I have said that the earlier tax credit proposals have serious structural problems. The biggest problem they have is not saying how they will pay for their plans. Until Members talk about financing, all of these plans are sound and fury, signifying nothing.

These tax credit bills are obviously expensive, but so is the cost of 1 in 6 Americans being uninsured. In deaths, increased disability and morbidity, and more expensive use

of emergency rooms, American society pays for the uninsured. If we could end the national disgrace of un-insurance, we would save billions in improved productivity, reduced provider costs, bad debt, personal bankruptcy, and disproportionate share hospital payments.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for America to join the rest of the civilized world and provide health insurance for all its citizens.

REMEMBERING SYLVIA WURF

HON. JERROLD NADLER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, recently Brooklyn lost one of its most outstanding citizens, Sylvia Wurf. Sylvia worked for our former colleague, Representative Stephen J. Solarz, in his Coney Island District Office, in what is now the Eighth Congressional District. Sylvia Wurf was a remarkable public servant whose efforts on behalf of average citizens was legendary and an inspiration.

Steve Solarz, who knew her for many years, memorialized Sylvia, and I commend his moving eulogy to my colleagues' attention.

SYLVIA WURF: A GREAT LADY

Sylvia Wurf was an extraordinary woman—brilliant, tenacious, caring—but also ornary, cantankerous, exasperating.

She was a memorable person who, in a triumph of will and determination, not only fulfilled her potential as a human being, but made a difference in the lives of thousands of people who turned to her for assistance.

She may well have been the best Congressional case worker in the history of the Republic.

As I thought of Sylvia these last few days, I recalled the colloquy of Hotspur and Glendower in Shakespeare's Henry IV, when Hotspur says, "I can summon spirits from the vast and murky deep", and Glendower replies, "Why so can I. So can any man, but will they come when you dost call them?"

In Sylvia's case, the answer was, "yes". She could summon spirits, and they did come when she called them.

I used to say, "If I were ever in some remote part of the world and were kidnapped and thrown into a dungeon of slime, and I were given the chance to make one phone call, it would be to Sylvia. Where others would throw up their hands in despair, she would get on the phone and go to work."

Woe to the feckless bureaucrat whom Sylvia nagged until she got what she wanted. Pity the poor Ambassadors whom she awoke at 3:00 a.m. (their time) to assist someone with a visa problem. Weep for the Fortune 500 CEO, like the President of AT&T, whom she routed in his idyllic country home one summer Sunday to get an unlisted phone number.

The flip side of the coin was that she could be impossible, even insulting, not just to government bureaucrats, but even with constituents.

My favorite story about Sylvia was the one in which a constituent came up to see Sylvia, sat down at her desk, and said, "I'm Mrs. Schwartz." Sylvia replied, "I'm Mrs. Wurf." "You're Mrs. Wurf", the woman said, "I'm so surprised. You sounded so much younger on the phone." Realizing immediately that she had made a mistake, Mrs. Schwartz said, "Oh, what a stupid thing for me to say." "Don't worry, Mrs. Schwartz", said Sylvia. "I deal with stupid people all day long. Why should you be any different?"

It was, I am told on occasions like this, in our old Kings Highway office where everyone sat in one large room, that someone on the staff would hold up a sign saying, "Another Satisfied Customer".

Sylvia broke every rule in the book. There were innumerable occasions when I considered letting her go—but there were three reasons why I never did.

First, because working in the office gave meaning and purpose to her existence. And I could never bring myself to deprive her of the opportunity it afforded her to live a successful and satisfying life.

Second, and more importantly, because she was the Mark McGwire of Congressional case workers. If she struck out a lot—she also hit more home runs than anyone else. She was, in a very real sense, the most valuable case worker in the Congressional league.

But third, and most importantly, because she was a genuine inspiration.

I have always felt that nothing is more admirable than when an individual triumphs over adversity. And Sylvia, more so than anyone I ever knew personally, triumphed over adversity. I often used to think of how many other Sylvias there must be who never had the chance to do with their lives what Sylvia did with hers. And I never ceased to take pride from the incredulous reaction of so many of the people who asked for her assistance, but who never met her, when I told them she was legally blind.

About 15 years ago, at the funeral of Congressman Phil Burton, shortly after he had re-drawn the map of the California Congressional districts which guaranteed a Democratic majority in the California Congressional delegation for a decade, then Mayor Diane Feinstein of San Francisco said, "If Phil is where I think he is, he's already re-drawing the map of heaven."

Well, if Sylvia is where I think she is, she is already doing case work on behalf of the Lord for those in the lower reaches who want to join her in the more deluxe atmosphere upstairs. And you know what. She's getting some of them in!

SPEAKER HASTERT SPEECH TO
THE PARLIAMENT OF LITHUANIA

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter the following transcript of Speaker HASTERT's speech to the parliament of Lithuania into the House RECORD. I believe that it sends a great message of the commonalities between America and Lithuania. It also demonstrates why we must show concern for the events that occur outside the United States.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—House Speaker J. Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.) today released the following text of his speech to the Lithuania Parliament on March 30, 1999:

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Seimas, distinguished guests: Let me thank you for this great honor of addressing this assembly. I have traveled far to be here today—but not nearly as far as you have traveled over the last ten years.

Outside this building I was shown the barricades manned by those who stood their ground and defended this very Parliament. We in the United States Congress try to do our duty each day—to protect freedom and promote democracy. But for almost 200 years, we have not had to defend our Capitol Building from attack.

Of course, we know the stories of our founders who met in Philadelphia and swore their lives and property to defend our new democracy. That is why the pictures of your courageous stand for freedom—flashed across the world—reminded us in the Congress of our own beginnings. It drove home the fact that freedom at times must be defended with our very lives.

Professor Landsbergis, your courageous stand for liberty served as an inspiration to all Americans. The American people continue to be inspired by your successful efforts to create a stable democracy in order to provide a better way of life for Lithuania's children.

As you may know, I am from the state of Illinois, which is the home of the great city of Chicago. I think you all have heard of the city of Chicago. We are pleased President Adamkus was able to spend some of his life in Chicago. He contributed much to our country, and we are grateful for those contributions. But his heart was always here in Lithuania, with your struggle for freedom.

Illinois is also the home of two of my political heroes: Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan. Abraham Lincoln is best known to history for ending the barbaric practice of slavery in the United States. It was Abraham Lincoln who said: "Government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth." By working hard to create a stable and secure democracy, the Lithuanian people prove that truth.

History will record that Ronald Reagan challenged the 20th century version of slavery. It was Ronald Reagan who said: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." That eloquent statement, coupled by the hard work of Eastern Europeans yearning to be free, helped end Soviet aggression and created a new and bigger Europe. It is this new Europe that I want to talk to you about today.

The new Europe has a profound relationship with the United States. Part of that relationship comes from our cultural ties. In no small measure, Europe helped build America with the contributions of its people, whether they be Irish or Polish or German or Italian, or Lithuanian. An American ambassador once said to the Soviet premier: "When we talk about human rights behind the Iron Curtain, we are not interfering in your internal affairs. We are talking about family matters." Practically every family here has family in America.

In fact, close to one million Americans identify themselves as Lithuanian Americans. One of those Lithuanian Americans is Illinois Congressman John Shimkus, Chairman of the House Baltic Caucus, and a member of our delegation here today.

The American people stood by Lithuania in its times of trouble. They will stand by Lithuania in its times of prosperity. The new Europe is built on mutual trust, not mutual hatred. It is built on democracy, not totalitarianism. It is built on trade, not protectionism. It is built on the free exchange of ideas, not the narrow bounds of nationalism. It appeals to the better nature of mankind, not to the darker side of evil.

America's special relationship with the new Europe also comes from strategic considerations. This strategic relationship can partly be seen through the prism of NATO. NATO was founded as an organization dedicated to protecting its members from attack. It must not lose sight of its important mission: to defend its members. Lithuania is a strongly ally in the Partnership for Peace program. I support its membership—full membership—in NATO.

I want to congratulate you on your defense budget, soon to reach two percent of Gross Domestic Product. Your commitment to building a strong defense can only help your

case as you seek to become a full strategic partner. As a legislator who is working on his nation's budget, I know how difficult those choices can be. But you have made the right choice to fund the military and to improve the living conditions of its personnel.

A great threat to the new Europe is the current instability in the Balkans. The Milosevic regime is evil and free nations should confront evil wherever it occurs. We have a duty to say no to ruthless dictators, to draw the lines where evil knows no bounds.

We had a debate in the House of Representatives about the virtues of America's involvement in the Balkans conflict. Many of my colleagues in the House had reservations about American involvement in that region. But now that the United States is involved—let there be no mistake—no one should doubt the resolve of the American people as we work to bring justice to the Kosovo region.

The reports we have from Kosovo are deeply disturbing. If it is true that Serbia is attempting to wipe out Kosovar Albanians, those Serbs will be brought to justice. The democratic nations of Europe, and the United States as their partners in NATO, should not sit idly by when genocide is carried out in Europe. Defending freedom means defending defenseless people.

The new Europe must be on the front lines when it comes to fighting injustice. One way to achieve this goal is to become bigger. A bigger European Union is a better European Union. I believe it should stretch eastward to include the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe.

It is better for the United States for trade and security reasons. And it is better for the people of Europe who want to move to a more secure and prosperous future. We in the Congress support Lithuania's bid to become a full member of the European Union. By becoming a full member, Lithuania has a better opportunity to develop its export capabilities and its free market system. I want to congratulate Lithuania for becoming a model of regional stability. You have excellent relations with Poland, and your cooperation with your Nordic and Baltic neighbors is vitally important.

We also appreciate your efforts to find common ground with Russia and with your help in Kaliningrad. And we know how hard you are working to develop a positive relationship with Belarus.

Let me conclude by saluting you, the people of Lithuania. You have given much to the United States. You have given us athletes who star in basketball and hockey. You have given us politicians who help us in the United States Congress. And you have given us hundreds of thousands of unheralded, hardworking citizens who help make up the intricate tapestry that is America.

Someone once asked President Reagan whether he thought we were living in a time without heroes. He replied by saying that those who fear we have no heroes: "just don't know where to look. You can see heroes every day going in and out of factory gates. Others, a handful in number, produce enough food to feed all of us and then the world beyond. You meet heroes across a counter—and they are on both sides of that counter. They are entrepreneurs—with faith in themselves and faith in an idea—who create new jobs, new wealth and opportunity. They are individuals and families whose taxes support the government, and whose voluntary gifts support church, charity, culture, art and education. Their patriotism is quite but deep. Their values sustain our national life."

Many of these every day American heroes call Lithuania their ancestral homeland. Let me say a final word about Lithuania's heroes. Later today, our delegation will visit

the KGB museum. We will go there to pay our respects to those who suffered and died in the hands of an evil and brutal occupation.

President Lincoln, when he dedicated the cemetery at Gettysburg, said that mere words could not dedicate nor consecrate the sacrifices of brave men who defend liberty. Likewise, there is nothing that we—who have not experienced such a place, can do to honor it. Those who suffered in that building in defense of freedom have already made it hallowed ground. But we can remember—and we can educate future generations, and by so doing ensure that such a place will never be build again.

America is a better place because of Lithuania. And I hope that Lithuania is a freer and a stronger democracy because of the efforts of the American people.

May God bless the people of Lithuania like He has blessed the people of the United States.

CONGRATULATING ARROWHEAD CREDIT UNION ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GEORGE E. BROWN, JR.

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. MARY BONO

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, on June 12, 1999, the Inland Empire Congressional Delegation resolved to congratulate Arrowhead Credit Union on its 50th anniversary. Therefore, we are inserting into the RECORD a copy of the resolution.

RESOLUTION

CONGRATULATING ARROWHEAD CREDIT UNION ON ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Whereas Arrowhead Credit Union, based in San Bernardino, California, is one of the leading financial institutions of the Inland Empire region of California and one of the finest state-chartered credit unions in the United States;

Whereas Arrowhead Credit Union, owned by its members, is dedicated to serving their best interests, to providing value relative to cost, and to earning their trust and confidence by operating in an ethical and financially sound manner;

Whereas Arrowhead Credit Union, which turned 50 years old on April 19, 1999, is ranked among the top 100 state-chartered credit unions in the United States by serving a membership of more than 74,000;

Whereas the Inland Empire community is pleased to join Arrowhead Credit Union in celebrating its 50th anniversary at the Ontario Convention Center on June 12, 1999: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved on this day of June 12, 1999, by the undersigned members of the Inland Empire Congressional Delegation that the Delegation, on behalf of the people of the Inland Empire,

(1) congratulates Arrowhead Credit Union on its 50th anniversary and wishes it continued success in the years to come;

(2) commends Arrowhead Credit Union for its outstanding contributions to the people

of the Inland Empire through its reliable, friendly, low cost financial services; and

(3) inserts a copy of this resolution into the Congressional Record in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Arrowhead Credit Union.

RECOGNIZING DR. HARVEY P. HANLEN

HON. JOHN E. PETERSON

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize a distinguished constituent of Pennsylvania's 5th Congressional District. On June 26, 1999, Dr. Harvey P. Hanlen of State College will be sworn in as the 78th president of the American Optometric Association during AOA's annual Congress in San Antonio, TX.

Dr. Hanlen is a graduate of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry and Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry. Throughout his career, Dr. Hanlen has been dedicated to the profession of optometry at the local, state, and national levels. He is past president of the Mid-Counties Optometric society and the Pennsylvania Optometric Association. In 1987, he was named Pennsylvania's Optometrist of the Year as well as the Pennsylvania College of Optometry's Alumnus of the Year. Dr. Hanlen has served the AOA as a member of the board of trustees, as secretary-treasurer, vice-president, and president-elect.

In addition to his professional achievements, Dr. Hanlen has been active in civic duties. He has been on the board of directors of the Jewish Community Council of State College. He also served as campaign chairman for the Centre County United Way.

Dr. Harvey Hanlen has distinguished himself as an outstanding leader in his profession and his community. I am pleased to join his many friends and colleagues in congratulating him on becoming the new president of the American Optometric Association.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. J.D. HAYWORTH

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, June 14, 1999, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote 204, passage of H.R. 1400, the Bond Price Competition Improvement Act of 1999. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

HONORING THE 50-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE BLACKMAN BARBECUE

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a valued tradition known as the Blackman Community Barbecue, which on Friday, June 25, 1999, will celebrate its 50th birthday.

For half a century, folks in the Blackman community of Rutherford County, TN, have

been conducting this event to raise money for worthy causes while promoting the community's unique history, spirit and traditions. Begun by the still active Blackman Community Club, the annual event is held on a 2-acre site surrounded by the breathtaking beauty of the Tennessee countryside.

Residents and visitors alike flock in droves to this renowned event to sample tasty barbecue, homemade ice cream and generous helpings of southern hospitality. Anyone who has ever attended one of these barbecues knows firsthand the affection Blackman residents show their community and fellow man. I hope the next 50 Blackman Barbecues are as rewarding and successful as the first 50.

I congratulate each and every resident in the Blackman community for an event steeped in sincere respect for wholesome family values and traditions. And although there are many Blackman residents responsible for the success and longevity of the barbecue, the following have contributed and are still contributing immensely to the popular fund-raiser: D.H. McDonald and his wife, Frances; Donald McDonald; Lorrain Hunt; Mildred Hays; Kathy Wright; Elizabeth Smith; and John L. Batey.

HONORING TEMPLE KOL AMI ON ITS 25TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Temple Kol Ami in Plantation, Florida, on the occasion of its 25th Anniversary. It is a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to celebrate the congregation's longstanding commitment and outstanding service to the Broward County community.

For the past quarter century, Plantation has witnessed the steady growth of Temple Kol Ami within the Jewish community. From its humble start of just a few members in 1975, the Temple has flourished into a congregation of over eleven hundred families. With this dramatic growth of its membership, Temple Kol Ami responded to the demand for new space with various additions over the years including a new sanctuary and the recent dedication of the Elizabeth Shoshanna Harr Education Center. This extensive expansion of the organization is a testament to the Temple's strong community involvement and outreach efforts.

Over the course of the past 25 years, Temple Kol Ami has consistently maintained sharp focus on the needs of the congregation. Throughout these years of amazing development, the Temple has continued to serve its members and community while upholding the customs of Jewish life within the traditions of Reform Judaism. While upholding a tradition of excellence in spirituality, the Temple has also made the teaching of Judaism a top priority through the establishment of an Early Childhood Program, a Religious School, Adult Education Programs, and a Day School.

Mr. Speaker, Temple Kol Ami has spent the last twenty five years demonstrating its strong commitment to the spiritual well-being and Jewish education of its congregation while maintaining an excellent standard of community involvement. I am extremely proud to celebrate this anniversary with the members of

Temple Kol Ami, for their devotion to the Jewish faith and contributions to the surrounding community are truly evident during this glorious time of reflection upon their 25 years of success.

RENEWAL WEEK

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, this week is "Renewal Week" and I would like to express my strong support for the efforts of the Renewal Alliance. The Renewal Alliance is a bicameral group of Republican Senators and Representatives dedicated to civic and legislative efforts to reduce poverty in America.

This week, my colleagues on the Renewal Alliance and I will highlight the important role of institutions such as the family, neighborhoods, schools, houses of worship, and charitable organizations. The concept behind this is to strengthen communities and serve the poorest among us. In other words, it's a matter of neighbors helping neighbors.

I am personally concerned about the continuing moral decline in our nation. We need to get back to the basics. This can be done by emphasizing values and personal responsibility over hands-outs, which will instill diligence, self-help, and accountability to our society. These are the qualities that make good workers and prosperous Americans.

Mr. Speaker, we can accomplish so much more when we work together and build partnerships between citizens and community-based organizations. I applaud my fellow members of the Renewal Alliance for their selfless dedication to their communities and I encourage those who are not members of the Renewal Alliance to get involved and make a difference.

INTRODUCTION OF FRAUD AND REIMBURSEMENT REFORM PROVISIONS TO FUND FULLY THE MEDICARE EARLY ACCESS ACT OF 1999

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, a number of House members are introducing the Medicare Early Access Act of 1999 to help people between 55 and 65 years of age obtain affordable health insurance.

The proposal is almost fully funded over time through a requirement that beneficiaries pay for their own coverage. But there is an initial start-up cost to the program, and a temporary subsidy is necessary to mitigate "adverse selection" costs attributable to the fact that sicker-than-average individuals who are desperate for health insurance may sign up in disproportionate numbers for the program.

To ensure that Medicare's trust funds are not hurt by this new program, I am introducing a package of anti-fraud and administrative improvement provisions that will raise more than enough money to fund the start-up of the Medicare Early Access Act. These provisions are changes that we ought to be making anyway to strengthen the program, and I am

pleased that they fund this important new expansion of health insurance.

Over the long run, enactment of these provisions will help reduce Medicare's long-term financial problems.

Below is a brief description of the provisions. The bill will:

Pay for covered Medicare drugs on the basis of actual acquisition cost instead of the artificially high level of average wholesale price minus 5%, which was established by the Balanced Budget Act of 1997;

Lower Medicare payments for Epogen from \$10 to \$9 per 1,000 units. Epogen is now Medicare's most expensive drug, and taxpayers pay more than 80% of the cost;

Reform Medicare's partial hospitalization benefit. In a recent audit, the HHS Inspector General found Medicare payments for partial hospitalization services had a 90% error rate;

Improve the accuracy of Medicare's secondary payer provisions to require health plans and employers to provide insurance data on covered enrollees;

Allow Medicare to get a volume discount by contracting with HHS-designated "Centers of Excellence" for complex operations at hospitals that have better-than-average outcomes.

TRIBUTE TO ALHAMBRA, ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to join the community of Alhambra, Illinois in celebrating its 150th birthday. A celebration of the sesquicentennial is being held June 18 through 20.

The history of the community will come to life with the festivities. Co-chairpersons Deb Reckman and Joe Dauderman invite the public to join in on the weekend of activities to celebrate the long, colorful history of the town.

I commend the citizens of Alhambra for celebrating their rich history and ancestor heritage during this celebration. It is important to remember pioneer families such as those of James Farris, Robert Aldrich, William Hoxsey and William Pitman whom first rode across Illinois to settle along Silver Creek. These festivities will help the citizens of today gain a greater understanding and respect for their city's past.

The Alhambra banners say "Moving Forward Into the Next Century." I as well as community of Alhambra are looking forward to that to seeing Alhambra continue on its path into the next century and wish them the best of luck in achieving great things.

STATEMENT OF INTRODUCTION OF THE PUBLIC RESOURCES DEBT REDUCTION ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Today I am introducing the Public Resources Debt Reduction Act to eliminate many wasteful and environmentally destructive subsidies. My bill would save taxpayers hundreds of billions of dollars per year and end environmentally harmful practices that have continued for too long under antiquated laws.

The array of subsidies for mining, timber, irrigation and other industries that use natural resources belonging to the America people is truly astounding. Multinational mining companies take gold and silver from public land without paying the public a dime of the value. Each year the taxpayers ante up millions to build roads into previously pristine areas of the National Forests so that timber companies can cut down the trees. Irrigators will pay back less than half of the cost of dams and water projects constructed for their benefit—and that repayment takes 50 years with no interest charges.

These direct subsidies are only the beginning of the support we give to natural resource developers. On top of the discount rates for use of the public's resources, each of these industries also receives other benefits, from tax breaks to farm payments.

While these corporations profit handsomely from the public's resources, they often create environmental damage that the public finds itself paying to repair. Abandoned mines litter the West. Unstable clear-cuts in the forests have produced dangerous mudslides this year, as well as damaging wildlife habitat and harming fishing streams. Dams and diversions for irrigation destroy river reaches and wetlands while interfering with annual salmon migration.

Why should the industries that despoil our environment continue to receive heavy subsidies from the American people? Why should these "corporate welfare" benefits remain sacrosanct when we have eliminated welfare support for many poor people?

The answer, of course, is that these subsidies should not remain in place. We cannot pass up this opportunity to eliminate wasteful spending, decrease the deficit and simultaneously reduce environmental damage.

That is why, along with 19 original cosponsors, I have introduced the Public Resources Debt Reduction Act. This measure, which was supported by nearly 60 co-sponsors in the last Congress, would reduce the flagrant waste of billions of dollars in taxpayer money on free minerals, cheap timber, subsidized water and other benefits for those who use our natural resources.

The provisions of this bill (some of which have previously been adopted by the House of Representatives or House Committees) include:

Requiring a fair return for oil and gas leases, grazing leases, and utility rights of way.

Establishing that fees for using federal resources recover all the costs of making those resources available, with a separate provision eliminating timber sales at prices that do not cover administrative costs and overhead.

Halting the give-away of hardrock minerals and sales of mineral lands for next to nothing.

Charging full costs for federal water used to irrigate surplus crops.

Moving receipts from federal timber sales back "on budget."

Mandating annual budget reporting of the cost of natural resource subsidies

The special deals and subsidies given to natural resource development on public lands are relics of another time, a time when the West was young and natural resources were seen as the best incentive to settle the land. Now the West has long been settled, and we

can no longer afford the environmental destruction or the loss to the Treasury resulting from nineteenth century development policies. In the twenty-first century, industry must be required to pay a fair price for using public resources.

TRIBUTE TO JODY HALL-ESSER

HON. JULIAN C. DIXON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. DIXON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to pay tribute today to Mrs. Jody Hall-Esser, Chief Administrative Officer for the city of Culver City, California. On July 9, 1999, Mrs. Hall-Esser, will retire from city government capping a distinguished career spanning a quarter of a century in public service to her community. To honor Jody for her many years of exemplary service to the citizens of Culver City, a celebration in her honor will be held at the Culver City City Hall on Wednesday, July 7. As one who has worked closely with this extraordinary and selfless public servant for many years, and who possesses first-hand knowledge of her outstanding service to our community, I am pleased to have this opportunity to publicly recognize and commend her before my colleagues here today.

Jody has served in many capacities since joining the Culver City government in 1971. She was initially hired as the first Director of the Culver City Senior Citizens Center, a position she held for a few years before leaving to work in the private sector. In 1976 she returned to the city as the first Housing Manager in the Community Development Department, where she spent the next three years designing and executing Culver City's rent subsidy and residential rehabilitation loan and grant programs. She also is credited with implementing the construction of the city's first rental housing development for the low-income elderly citizens of Culver City.

In 1979 Jody was named Community Development Director and Assistant Executive Director of the Culver City Redevelopment Agency. For more than a decade, she headed the city agency tasked with Planning, Engineering, Redevelopment, Housing and Grants operations. Among her many accomplishments were establishment of the Landlord-Tenant Mediation Board; the Art in Public Places Program; and the Historic Preservation Program.

Jody was appointed Chief Administrative Officer and Executive Director of the Redevelopment Agency in 1991. For the past nine years, her many responsibilities have included implementing public policy mandates promulgated by the Culver City City Council, as well as managing the city's human, financial, and material resources. She has compiled an impressive and enviable record of accomplishments, despite seeing the city through a period of civil unrest, a major earthquake, damage caused by torrential rains, and a severe economic recession. While just one of these occurrence would test the tolerance of most individuals—not Jody Hall-Esser. She merely redoubled her efforts to ensure that the residents of Culver City received the necessary local, state, and federal resources they needed to remain afloat.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GREG WALDEN

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I was not present for yesterday's recorded vote on the passage of H.R. 1400, the Bond Price Competition Improvement Act of 1999, due to unavoidable weather delays in air travel and traffic congestion returning from the airport. Had I been present for this rollcall vote, I would have voted "yea." I request that the RECORD reflect this position.

HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE
FOR THOSE 55 AND OLDER

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, in the 104th and 105th Congresses, I introduced legislation to provide assistance in obtaining health insurance to those 55 and older. Today I rise again to introduce legislation that will help many individuals who find themselves without health insurance as they enter the later stage of their lives.

The COBRA Extension Act for 55-to-65 Year Olds extends the COBRA health continuation program to cover more individuals between age 55 and when they become eligible for Medicare at age 65. Under current law, individuals can keep COBRA coverage for 18 to 36 months, depending on the circumstances. That means that a person can be laid off from his or her job, receive 18 months of COBRA, and then find him or herself running out of COBRA coverage at age 55 with only limited, and expensive, places to turn for other health coverage.

One option available to these people is to find an individual health plan in the private market, but the cost of doing so is extremely prohibitive. Rates and availability of coverage in the individual market vary widely, with a person's health, age, and other factors being taken into account. For those in their 50's and 60's, there are large disadvantages and huge expenses in trying to obtain individual coverage since most insurance premiums rise sharply with age or pre-existing conditions.

For example, in the San Francisco market, Blue Cross of California offers a basic, barebones in-hospital plan with a high deductible in the range of \$2,000. For a couple under age 29, the cost is \$99 per month. But the cost soars to \$389 for a couple between 60 and 64. This is an outrageous fourfold increase in insurance rates for the older couple—and it is by no means a comprehensive policy.

Group health insurance is much less expensive than individual policy insurance, and that is why the current COBRA benefit is so vital and useful. The difference in annual cost for obtaining group versus individual health insurance can easily be several thousand dollars.

Under current COBRA rules, people age 55 and over who are reaching the end of their COBRA coverage and who cannot afford to enter the private market face the prospect of

being without health coverage for up to 10 years—until the time they are eligible for Medicare. At that late point in their careers, the task of finding a new job with employer based health coverage can be close to impossible. Some people, such as widows receiving coverage through their late spouse's employer, may need to re-enter the workforce for the first time in years.

Unfortunately, many near-elderly individuals have faced this situation in the recent past. Increasingly during the 1990s, losing one's job due to downsizing and lay-offs has created a gap in health insurance coverage for individuals over age 55. More near-elderly individuals may face the frightening reality of this situation as the number of people between the ages of 55 to 65 nearly doubles, from 23 million today to 42 million by the year 2020.

There exist numerous examples that help demonstrate the significance of the situation to older workers:

At AT&T, 34,000 jobs had to be cut in 1997. This is down from the original prediction of a cut of 40,000 jobs, but still a significant number. Workers were to receive a lump sum payment based on years of service, up to one year of paid health benefits and cash to cover tuition costs or to start a new business—but what happens to health coverage after one year?

Two giant New York City banks, Chase Manhattan and Chemical recently combined and 12,000 jobs from the combined banks were subsequently cut.

Last year, Massachusetts-based Polaroid reduced its workforce by seven percent, cutting over 2,400 jobs.

In December 1998, Citicorp announced it was slashing 10,400 jobs, six percent of its total workforce.

All in all, over 625,000 jobs were eliminated in 1998.

When the near-elderly lose their jobs in this manner, too often the unfortunate consequence is that they and their spouses also lose their health insurance coverage.

In order to assist these individuals over age 55 in maintaining health coverage, and provide an option for them that is better than entering the individual market, my bill modifies the current COBRA law by extending COBRA coverage until the age of Medicare eligibility for individuals who are age 55 or older at the time that their COBRA coverage would expire under current law.

Under this formulation, the maximum coverage available would be 13 years—a spouse who begins her 36 months of coverage at age 52 would then begin coverage under this bill at age 55 and be guaranteed health coverage until the point she becomes eligible for Medicare.

In order to compensate employers for the cost of this new COBRA continuation coverage, my bill calls for age-55+ enrollees receiving an extension of their COBRA benefits to pay 125 percent of the group rate policy (compared to 102 percent for most current COBRA eligible individuals and 150 percent for disabled COBRA enrollees). This provision recognizes the fact that this age group is more expensive to insure and compensates business accordingly.

I realize that the cost of paying one's share of a group insurance policy will still be too much of a burden for a number of Americans. Many of them will be forced into the uncertain

mercies of State Medicaid policies. But for many others, this bill will provide an important bridge to age 65 when they will be eligible for Medicare.

While we are taking other steps to resolve this burgeoning problem, this step is crucial to any long-term resolution. As greater numbers of baby-boomers enter their mid-to-late 50s, it becomes even more apparent that we need to act now. We cannot allow our early retirees and their spouses to be left without this important option for health coverage. I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact the COBRA Extension Act for 55 to 65 Year Olds.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, June 9, 1999, I was unable to cast a vote on the House Journal, because I was involved in an important meeting to bring the E-rate program to the nation's school children. Had I been present I would have voted "aye."

HONORING JUANITA CLEGGETT HOLLAND

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, thank you for giving me this opportunity to rise before you today to honor a woman who has accomplished much in the name of education. On June 17, friends, colleagues, and family will gather to pay tribute to Mrs. Juanita Cleggett Holland of Flint, Michigan, who is retiring from the Flint Community Schools after 34 years of dedicated service to the community.

For nearly four decades, thousands of young people have had their lives enriched due to the influence of Juanita Holland. A graduate of Tennessee State University and the University of Michigan, Juanita entered the Flint School District in 1965, as a teacher at Kennedy School. After 3 years, she went on to Emerson Junior High, and moved from Emerson to Northern Senior High in 1976, where she remained until 1982. A certified social worker, Juanita realized her talents could be used in other ways within the education world, and as a result, became a crisis social worker for the Flint School District, where she was assigned six different schools. From there, she became a social worker for Neithercut School and McKinley Middle School, where she had been assigned until now.

In addition to being a State of Michigan certified social worker, Juanita displays superior credentials by her affiliation with the Academy of Certified Social Workers, and her status as a Board Certified Diplomate. Juanita also has a long history of community involvement as well. She is extremely active in her Church, and also her sorority, Delta Sigma Theta, Inc. She has worked with or served on the boards for such groups and organizations as the Sirna Center, the Tall Pine Council of the Boy

Scouts of America, and the Dort-Oak Park Neighborhood House. She has most served on the board for the Michigan Family Independence Agency since 1992, and has served as board chairperson since 1997.

In efforts to improve the quality of education for Flint's children, Juanita has been at the forefront of projects designed to enhance discussion on outcome based education, school improvement, community service, and group work.

Mr. Speaker, in my former role as a teacher, and my current role as Member of Congress, it has been my duty to promote and enhance human dignity and the quality of life. I am grateful that there are people like Juanita Holland who have worked arduously to make my task easier. I ask my colleagues in the 106th Congress to join me in wishing her the best in her retirement.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL BUSINESS, FAMILY FARMS, AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTION ACT

HON. DAVID M. McINTOSH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. McINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to introduce the Small Business, Family Farms, and Constitutional Protection Act, a bill to prevent Federal agencies from implementing the UN global warming treaty, the Kyoto Protocol, prior to its ratification by the Senate.

Ever since October 1997, the Clinton Administration has called for enactment of a program commonly known as "credit for early action" or "early action crediting" as part of its global warming policy. Early action crediting is fundamentally a strategy to jump-start implementation of the non-ratified Kyoto Protocol and build a pro-Kyoto business constituency.

Enactment of an early action credit program would effectively repudiate the July 1997 Byrd-Hagel resolution (which passed the Senate by a vote of 95-0), fuel pro-Kyoto business lobbying, and penalize companies—including most small businesses and family farms—that do not jump on the global warming bandwagon.

Today, therefore, I am introducing legislation to block further Administration efforts to advocate, develop, or implement an early action credit program.

What is wrong with early action crediting? First, early action crediting would reward companies for doing today what they would later be compelled to do under a ratified Kyoto Protocol. It is a form of implementation without ratification.

Second, and more mischievously, early action crediting would turn scores of major companies into a pro-Kyoto business lobby. The program would create credits potentially worth millions of dollars but which would have no actual cash value unless the Kyoto Protocol, or a comparable domestic regulatory program, were ratified or adopted. Thus, participating companies would acquire financial motives to support ratification.

Third, although touted as "voluntary" and "win-win," early action crediting is subtly coercive and would create a zero-sum game in

which small business can only lose. Every credit awarded to early reducers would draw down the pool of emission credits available to all other U.S. companies in the Kyoto Protocol compliance period. Thus, if the Kyoto Protocol were ratified, companies that did not "volunteer" for early action would not merely forego benefits, they would be penalized—hit with extra compliance burdens. They would be forced either to make deeper emission reductions than the Protocol itself would require, or to purchase emission credits at prices higher than would otherwise prevail.

Since early action crediting programs penalize those who do not "volunteer," it is worth asking who the non-participants are likely to be. The answer should be obvious. Most small businesses and family farms lack the discretionary capital, technical expertise, and legal sophistication required to play in the early credit game. Most do not have the wherewithal to hire special accountants and engineers to monitor and reduce carbon emissions. Most do not have environmental compliance departments ready and able to negotiate early action agreements with Federal agencies. However, under the Kyoto Protocol, small businesses would have to pay higher energy costs and many would have to reduce their use of fossil fuels. So, while making the Kyoto Protocol more likely to be ratified, early action crediting would also make the treaty more costly to small business.

Unfortunately, the mischief doesn't stop there. Since early reducers would be rewarded at the expense of those who do not participate, many businesses that would otherwise never dream of "volunteering" may be constrained to do so for purely defensive reasons. Companies that see no particular benefit in early reductions may "volunteer" just so they do not get stuck in the shallow end of the credit pool in the Kyoto Protocol compliance period. This dynamic is exactly what pro-Kyoto partisans desire, as it would build up a large mass of companies holding costly paper assets that are completely valueless unless the Protocol is ratified.

Proponents claim that early action crediting is not linked to the Kyoto Protocol because the credits could be used to offset emission reduction obligations under a domestic program to regulate greenhouse gases. But, recall that the Senate, in the July 1997 Byrd-Hagel Resolution, voted to reject any agreement that, like the Kyoto Protocol, exempts three-quarters of the world's nations from binding commitments. If the Senate preemptively rejected the treaty because it is not "truly global," what is the likelihood Congress would some day enact a unilateral greenhouse gas reduction program that applies to U.S. companies alone? There is no change of that happening. The word "early" in "early action crediting" means just one thing—earlier than the Kyoto Protocol compliance period.

Proponents also claim that early action crediting is an "insurance policy" needed to protect companies that have already invested in emissions reductions from paying twice under the Kyoto Protocol or a domestic regulatory program. Now, let's leave aside the question of whether Congress should "insure" companies that decide, for their own reasons, to implement a treaty the Senate has not ratified. The relevant question is whether, absent a crediting program, companies that act early to reduce emissions would be penalized under a future climate treaty.

Again, the answer should be obvious. If the Kyoto Protocol is ever ratified, it will be because the policy makers and companies now promoting early action crediting lead the charge. The pro-Kyoto coalition will ensure that any implementing legislation associated with the Protocol recognizes the emissions reductions companies have already made, certified, and duly reported. To contend otherwise is to suppose that the pro-Kyoto lobby would implement the Protocol in a way that inflicts maximum pain on its corporate base. Unless early action proponents sincerely believe that "we have met the enemy, and it is us," the "insurance" argument makes no sense.

Let's also be clear about one thing. Early action crediting is not needed to enable companies to undertake, or the Federal Government to record, voluntary reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. Current law already provides a voluntary program for reporting such reductions. Established by section 1605(b) of the 1992 Energy Policy Act, the existing program is highly efficient, flexible, and accessible to everybody, from large utilities supplying electric power to families planting trees. Unlike early action crediting, the 1605(b) program is in no way linked to the Kyoto Protocol, does not create cash incentives in support of ratification, and does not promote the interests of large corporations at the expense of small business or consumers.

Mr. Speaker, the bill I am introducing today would protect small business, family farms, and the U.S. Constitution in the following ways. First, it prohibits Federal agencies from advocating, developing, or implementing an early action credit program until and unless the Senate ratifies the Kyoto Protocol. Second, it makes permanent the 1999 VA-HUD Appropriations Act restriction against backdoor regulatory implementation of Kyoto Protocol. Third, it prohibits Federal agencies from regulating carbon dioxide—the principal gas covered by the Kyoto Protocol—without new and specific legislation by Congress.

Who should support the Small Business, Family Farms, and Constitutional Protection Act? Every Member of Congress who believes the small businesses and family farms should not be forced to incur additional burdens under a future global warming treaty. Every Member who believes that Federal agencies should not implement a treaty that has not been ratified. And every Member who believes that Congress should not artificially boost the fortunes of the pro-Kyoto lobby.

The Constitution established a clear process for enacting international treaties into law. The President signs the treaty and submits it to the Senate for its advice and consent. The treaty becomes law only if two-thirds of the Senators vote in favor of ratification. My bill will help safeguard the integrity of this constitutional process.

TRIBUTE TO SCHULER'S RESTAURANT & PUB ON THEIR 90TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Schuler's Restaurant & Pub of

Marshall, Michigan on 90 years of tradition in hospitality and fine dining.

Schuler's heritage is a testament to the entrepreneurial spirit of the restaurant's founder, Albert Schuler. Through four generations of family ownership, Schuler's has maintained an impeccable reputation for its unforgettable fare, impeccable service, and casually elegant atmosphere. Albert's first restaurant quickly became a popular local gathering spot. His son Win Schuler expanded the business and it became the place to go for fine dining for my family and thousands of other families in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. Win's son and current President and Chairman, Hans Schuler states "We are able to celebrate Schuler's 90 year tradition of hospitality and fine dining because of our evolving vision for the restaurant and our ongoing investment in its future."

As a cornerstone of historic Marshall, Michigan, the City of Hospitality, Schuler's 505 seat restaurant features exquisite old world ambience with its trademark wood beams containing quotes from pundits such as Shakespeare, Voltaire, and Mark Twain. Schuler's serves over a quarter of a million people a year, and serves more than 1,600 people alone on its busiest day, Mother's Day. Because of Marshall's location, it has often been called, the "Crossroads of the Big Ten Conference", and has served famous college coaches such as Ara Parshegian, Bo Schembechler and George Perles, to name a few. As such, Schuler's has created a reputation that reaches well beyond their immediate community, yet never losing sight of their service to their community.

Throughout the next six months, Schuler's will honor their tremendous milestone by offering several events that will give them the opportunity to share their accomplishments with everyone in the community. These events include a monthly celebrity bartender, a complimentary dinner to anyone celebrating a birthday in their 90's, and a 20% discount to those families who dine with three generations present.

I am inspired by the great entrepreneurial legacy and commitment to the values that Schuler's has been founded upon, its long history, and its family ownership. Congratulations Schuler's for 90 years of business and much continued success for many years to come.

COMMENDING THE GOVERNMENT OF TAIWAN ON THEIR \$300 MILLION AID PACKAGE TO THE KOSOVO REFUGEES

HON. ALBERT RUSSELL WYNN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud The Republic of China on Taiwan for generously offering \$300 million in humanitarian aid to the Kosovo refugees. President Lee Teng-hui's considerate offer is representative of Taiwan's commitment to protecting and promoting human rights and fulfilling its responsibilities as a member of the international community.

The Republic of China on Taiwan is faced with Chinese Communist aggression on a daily basis and experiences first hand the

threat of aggression. Through their aid contribution to the Kosovo refugees, the Republic of China on Taiwan serves as an example to the international community that with generosity and kindness toward their fellow human beings, peace can be achieved worldwide. The \$300 million aid package includes emergency support for food, shelters, medical care, and education, as well as short term job training for some Kosovar refugees in Taiwan. Moreover, Taiwan has sponsored a humanitarian mission to the refugee camps in the Balkans in which Kosovars were supplied with essential relief items.

This aid package certainly comes at an opportune time. As the Serb troops begin their pullout, many stranded refugees in the Kosovo mountains are in dire need of food, clothing and shelter. This assistance will contribute directly to their needs and will be critical in the uphill battle of rebuilding their homes.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in commending the Taiwan government for its efforts to promote peace in the Balkans and assist in the safe return of nearly one million Kosovars to their homeland.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY—AN INSTITUTION DEDICATED TO EDUCATION, OPENNESS, AND ENLIGHTENMENT

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite my colleagues to join me in recognizing the achievements of Central European University (CEU), one of the newest and most significant forces for intellectual and economic progress in Eastern Europe. As I learned during a recent visit to the University, CEU's growth and influence are making an important contribution to the future of Hungary, the Czech Republic, and the other young democracies to the east of the Danube River.

Ten years ago, as nearly half a century of Soviet domination crumbled across the expanse of Central and Eastern Europe, a small collection of concerned intellectuals met in Dubrovnik in the former Yugoslavia to discuss the future of liberal education and that region. After decades of censorship and suppression at the whim of communist governments, they hoped to create a new center of academic freedom for citizens of all ideological and ethnic backgrounds. The labors of these far-sighted men and women led to the birth of Central European University, which has rapidly developed into one of Europe's leading centers of higher education.

Central European University, which claimed 100 students in its first year of existence (1991), now has an enrollment of 660 students from over 35 countries. CEU's faculty also reflects this diversity, featuring 60 professors from 26 countries and a host of prestigious visiting educators from top-level institutions throughout Europe and North America. These leading scholars help to foster an environment free of the political and philosophical rigidity of Eastern Europe's communist past, allowing young minds to flourish.

CEU's remarkable renaissance can be attributed principally to the generosity of George

Soros, a Hungarian immigrant who came to the United States as a refugee from Nazism. He has become one of America's most successful and respected financial leaders, and he has donated hundreds of millions of dollars to important social and economic causes around the world. The Open Society Institute, founded by Soros to promote freedom in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, has immeasurably advanced the social and political climate in the newly free countries in this region. The Central European University is one of many pro-education, pro-openness, and pro-liberty projects funded by George Soros since the collapse of the Soviet Empire. Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to join me commending this outstanding philanthropist for all he has done to further these vital objectives during the past decade.

Mr. Speaker, last March I had the opportunity to attend the Central European University's conference entitled "Between Past and Future". This gathering featured a wealth of insight opinions from leaders including former anti-communist dissident and current Budapest Mayor Gabor Demszky, Czech Deputy Foreign Minister and human rights activist Martin Palous, and numerous other authorities on the future of Central and Eastern Europe. Respected media figures—among them New York Times journalist R.W. Apple, Time magazine political correspondent James Carney, and NBC news correspondent Claire Shipman—also participated. The conference addressed some of the region's most pressing issues, ranging from ethnic nationalism to political stability in Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Macedonia, and other countries in the area. The presentations and discussions greatly impressed me, as did CEU's wisdom in organizing this excellent event.

It is my hope that Central European University will serve as a role model for intellectual openness and academic excellence throughout all of the nations formerly dominated by the Soviet Union. I am confident that the CEU will help to mold a new generation of citizens encumbered by the social and cultural restrictions forced upon their parents and grandparents, young leaders who are intellectually and ideologically prepared to build new societies atop the moral foundation on liberty and freedom that we Americans has cherished for centuries.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to the wonderful accomplishments and unlimited promise of Central European University.

**RICHARD URRUTIA ACHIEVES THE
AMERICAN DREAM**

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize and pay tribute to Mr. Richard Urrutia of Pueblo, Colorado, who after 39 years of work for Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company, has announced his retirement. Because of his tremendous work ethic, his drive, and dedication, Mr. Urrutia has proven that one can achieve the American Dream.

After graduating from Central High School in 1958, Mr. Urrutia was offered a job as a janitor at the R.C. Cola plant. Upon accepting the position, Richard began his uphill climb. Through hard work and determination he eventually became the General Manager of Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company.

Mr. Urrutia grew fond of many Pueblo organizations through his interaction with various groups as a delivery-truck driver. Dear to his heart are the YMCA and its camp near San Isabel where for many years he delivered beverages. Even though he is retiring, Richard Urrutia has no intention of slowing down and plans to stay involved in the Pueblo community. I know he hopes that the next generation of youth in Pueblo will have the opportunities to achieve the success he had, and he will undoubtedly contribute his time to ensuring a bright future for the younger citizens of Pueblo.

Today, as Mr. Richard Urrutia opens the page on a new chapter in his life, I would like to offer my gratitude for the example he has set and for the inspiration which he provides. It is clear that Pueblo has benefited greatly from his honest work ethic and desire to help others succeed. I would like to congratulate Mr. Urrutia on a job well done, and wish him the best of luck in all of his future endeavors.

**CRISIS IN KOSOVO (ITEM NO. 9)
REMARKS BY RICK NEWMAN,
SENIOR EDITOR FOR U.S. NEWS
AND WORLD REPORT**

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, on May 20, 1999, I joined with Rep. CYNTHIA A. MCKINNEY, Rep. BARBARA LEE, Rep. JOHN CONYERS and Rep. PETER DEFAZIO in hosting the fourth in a series of Congressional Teach-In sessions on the Crisis in Kosovo. If a lasting peace is to be achieved in the region, it is essential that we cultivate a consciousness of peace and actively search for creative solutions. We must construct a foundation for peace through negotiation, medication, and diplomacy.

Part of the dynamic of peace is a willingness to engage in meaningful dialogue, to listen to one another openly and to share our views in a constructive manner. I hope that these Teach-In sessions will contribute to this process by providing a forum for Members of Congress and the public to explore options for a peaceful resolution. We will hear from a variety of speakers on different sides of the Kosovo situation. I will be introducing into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD transcripts of their remarks and essays that shed light on the many dimensions of the crisis.

This presentation is by Rick Newman, Senior Editor covering defense for US News and World Report. He began covering military affairs in 1995, and to date has reported on a wide spectrum of defense issues from overseas operations to the future of military technology. He was awarded the Gerald R. Ford Prize for Distinguished Defense Reporting for his work in 1996. Mr. Newman graduated from Boston College in 1988 with B.A.s in English literature and economics.

Mr. Newman relates his first-hand experience with the treatment of journalists by the military during periods of wartime. He discusses the key lessons that he believes the military has learned over the years about how to advance their propaganda by manipulating public opinion through a willing press corps. Following these remarks is an article by Mr. Newman about how NATO bombings have pulverized Yugoslavian targets and caused widespread suffering in the civilian population.

PRESENTATION BY RICK NEWMAN OF U.S.
NEWS AND WORLD REPORT

One formula for starting a story is to begin with some anecdote that illustrates a larger point you want to get across. That's how I'm going to start today, with an anecdotal lead.

I'm the defense reporter for US News; my job is to cover the military, down to the soldiers who fight in the field, the airmen who fly the planes, and so on. About three or four months ago I had made arrangements with the army to "imbed," as they say, with any army troops who got involved in some kind of campaign in Kosovo, whether that be peacekeeping which it looked like at the time, or whatever. They said "Roger that," (that's what they say in the army) and everything looked like it was in order. I told them that I wanted to get a good "imbedding" slot with the command part of this group. That means I would deploy with them, I would basically live with them. I would be one of them in a way, except I wouldn't carry a weapon, and I'd see what they do from their perspective.

So this was all going along fine, and Task Force Hawk, this group of helicopters, gets deployed to Albania. They call me up and say, "Are you ready to deploy? You're going to be in the hip pocket of the commander for this thing. You're going to be able to see how he runs this show." And I said, "That sounds great." I eventually got my way over to Europe, told them what day I was going to show up. I had to go down to Fifth Headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany, get outfitted with "mop gear," which is the chemical weapons protection stuff that goes from head to toe. They gave me a Kevlar helmet and a flack vest; I made a reservation to fly into Albania the next day and join up with them.

That night I got a call from the public affairs guy with Task Force Hawk in Albania. He said, "Just want to check in with you, Rick, and I just want to advise you of something. The commanders here, someone pointed out to them a story that you wrote about indicted war criminals in Bosnia last year and military efforts to track down some of those people. And this was a story that revealed some details about secret operations and so on, and the guy said, 'Having seen that story they just don't feel they can trust you anymore, and you're no longer welcome to embed with the command element of Task Force Hawk.'" So I said, "That's wonderful news. Thank you very much. I'll head back home."

That's about how the first 4 to 5 weeks of this war went, in terms of relations between the press and the military. The press was largely kept outside the gates, outside the fence, looking in, trying to figure out what was going on, not getting a lot of information on what was going on, very sparse statements coming out. In the last four weeks or so that has improved. NATO and the Pentagon have been releasing more information, and I've had some better opportunities personally to cover some of the people who are actually fighting this war, to find out how they do it, what they think about it, and so on. But this is a problematic war in terms of coverage by the press. There is tension in all wars between the military and the press

that's trying to cover them. I think it's worse in this case.

The war is not going well. Clearly it's not going well. You don't have to be a genius to see that the stated aims of the people who launched this are not being achieved, and on the military side there are rules designed to limit access by the press even more than usual. For instance, General Clark, who's the four-star general in Europe running this thing, instituted essentially a gag rule on all of his subordinate commanders. They have been forbidden to talk to the press—absolutely forbidden, on the record or not—and you can imagine the sort of effect that has had down the chain for people who are not technically commanders or subordinate commanders. They technically could talk but they don't want to risk stepping outside that rule. So this has been a very difficult war to cover, in terms of just finding out what is going on. I think we are getting more information about what is going on because, ironically, official Serb TV is broadcasting it and that gives us some material to go back and pry information we otherwise wouldn't be getting out of these people.

For me this boils down to what I am going to call "three lessons learned." This is what they do in the military after something is over or while it is going on: they figure out what the lessons learned are. So I am just going to go through three here.

First lesson learned for me is that no news is bad news. If the Pentagon is not telling you what's happening in an operation, it's probably because what's happening is not good or does not appear to be favorable to the Pentagon. I believe this was the case for the first four weeks, when they would not say anything about how many sorties they were flying, what kinds of weapons they were using, what they were doing, what they were accomplishing. The fact is that they were accomplishing almost nothing. It was one of the weakest starts to an actual war in recent times, and that was reflected in the fact that not much was happening. On the other side it was a demonstrable failure, because all these ethnic Albanians were being flushed out of Kosovo.

Second lesson learned is that the body count mentality is alive and well, only these days we're not counting bodies, we're counting targets. We get this rundown of targets at the Pentagon every day. They'll say, for example: "Last night we struck eighteen target sets, there were 96 dimpies (a particular aim point on a target), today we've flown such and such sorties." This all seems to beg the question of how this is relevant to the objective of the war. We've heard more about these counts that supposedly demonstrate success than we have about how this war is actually doing in accomplishing the goals stated by President Clinton and others at the outset. That's something to watch out for. I think the press has been somewhat glib in this.

My third lesson learned is that the spokesmen for this war, the spinmeisters, are in many cases smarter than the press. I think the propaganda campaign has been very successful. I think the Pentagon and NATO have managed to find slow news days to get their message across. I think they have distracted attention on a regular basis from the observable fact that this war is not accomplishing what it is supposed to accomplish. I'll run down a list of a few things here. One of my pet peeves has been the headlines that say "NATO Intensifies Air War." We see this headline almost every week. Technically you could drop one additional bomb per day and you'd be intensifying the air war, which is nearly what has been happening. I think that this is less intense than any air war any member of the air force can recall. That's the nature of this graduated campaign.

I'll also mention briefly some of the claims from the podium at the Pentagon and the podium at NATO headquarters about atrocities. These are interesting standards for reporting this sort of thing. I'm thinking, for instance, of the rape camps. When Ken Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman, first mentioned the rape camps he was pressed about the source of the information, and it turned out the source was one person, probably an indirect source, and probably a member of the KLA. I don't think that that's the standard the Pentagon usually applies, and I know that if we apply that standard in journalism we get criticized for having low standards. That seems to be the standard these days. Another example is the Secretary of Defense saying, "We have reports that up to a hundred thousand ethnic Albanians may have been murdered." I seriously doubt they have evidence that a hundred thousand have been murdered. I think they have evidence that something less than ten thousand have been murdered.

We'll see how this gets sorted out when this war is over. The last thing that has kind of bothered me is everything that the press has been making out of various weapons systems. First it was the A-10, the low flying attack plane. We were just waiting for the A-10 to get into the action back around week two or week three. This is the thing that flies low under certain circumstances that don't exist in Yugoslavia yet. It flies low and can blow up dozens of tanks on a pass with its thirty-millimeter gun. The New York Times had a picture of the A-10s being deployed to Italy. The A-10 hasn't done anything of the sort, as anyone who has been associated with this campaign could have told you and did tell some of us from the very beginning. We're running these stories, we're sort of being urged, or certainly not discouraged, to run these stories, because it sounds like a wonder weapon is in the offing here, and Milosevic had better back down. The Apache helicopters are another example of this. There have been questions about how and when those are going to be used. From the day it was announced they were going, they have been held out as a big wonder weapon.

I'll just end with the thought that when this is over, we in the press are going to do a lot of post-mortem analysis of how this campaign went. I think there's also a case to be made that there should be a lot of post-mortem analysis of how the press handled this war.

MAKING WAR FROM 15,000 FT.—A WAR OF HALF MEASURES RUNS SHORT ON TARGETS AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

(By Richard J. Newman)

If a rising unemployment rate is any indication of how a war is going, then NATO ought to be pleased. According to Serbian government estimates, nearly half a million Yugoslavs, many employed in factories shattered by NATO bombs, have lost their jobs since the airstrikes began in March. Other privations are setting in. Serbia last week cut civilian gasoline rations in half, to about 2.5 gallons per car each month.

Yet as NATO's bombing of Yugoslavia enters its sixth week, it is in Washington that the will to fight seems wobbly. The House of Representatives last week voted exactly half for, and half against, a simple show of support for the air war. Another vote barred President Clinton from sending ground troops into Kosovo without congressional approval. Before Operation Desert Storm against Iraq in 1991, by contrast, Congress voted 302 to 230 to authorize all forms of military action.

The home front. Publicly, President Clinton shrugged off the no-confidence votes. But

morale at the White House is in a "downward spiral," according to one official there. And the war is just starting to hit home in America. The roughly 2,000 reservists now packing their bags are just a fraction of the 33,000 that the Pentagon could call up—for an air campaign that President Clinton indicated could last into July.

A decisive turn in the war certainly would sway some doubters. Yet details emerging on the conduct of Operation Allied Force reveal a campaign that seems as halfhearted as the political support in Washington. The intensity of the effort—gauged by "sortie rates" and other measures—is lower than that of any other U.S. air operation in recent history. Severe restraints on what NATO can bomb continue to frustrate war planners; even Great Britain, America's staunchest ally in the campaign, has vetoed targets sought by military commanders. And only in the last week has NATO started arranging basing rights and making other crucial preparations for 300 additional aircraft requested in early April. "The air war is going badly," says Michael O'Hanlon of the Brookings Institution in a study released last week. "The urgency of changing the war's strategy is . . . great."

NATO officials disagree, and point to strains within Yugoslavia as evidence that their deliberate approach is getting somewhere. Last week a flamboyant Yugoslav deputy prime minister, Vuk Draskovic, demanded on television that Slobodan Milosevic "stop lying" to the Serbian people. His candor promptly got him fired. Twenty-seven other prominent Belgrade intellectuals signed an open letter urging Milosevic (and NATO) to end hostilities. British officials reported that five retired Yugoslav generals were under house arrest—apparently for opposing Milosevic's tactics—and that hundreds of conscripts were deserting the Yugoslav Army each week.

A surge in travel to Moscow could be a further sign that Milosevic, and NATO, are looking to cut a deal. Both Strobe Talbott, the U.S. deputy secretary of state, and United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan conferred last week with Victor Chernomyrdin, Russia's former prime minister and now its mediator in the Balkans. Chernomyrdin then jetted off to Belgrade. The attention heartened Kremlin officials, who hope that Russia will have a role not just as a "postman" delivering messages but as a "middleman" trusted by the Serbs and headed by NATO.

Languor. Yet Belgrade continues to defy NATO's air war, which has been portrayed as intense but by important measures is actually rather languorous. The sortie rate—the number of flights flown per plane, per day—is less than 0.5, according to NATO officials and an independent analysis by Anthony Cordesman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies. That means each NATO jet flies on average just once every two days. By comparison, the sortie rate was about 1.25 during the Persian Gulf war and about 2.0 during Operation Deliberate Force, the bombing of Bosnia that helped to bring Milosevic to the bargaining table in 1995. Both of these campaigns also opened with severe bombardments. Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Charles Link says the Kosovo campaign should have started the same way: "In the first two nights we should have taken out the targets we took out over the next 21 days." He maintains that NATO jets based in Italy—closer to their targets than most aircraft were during the gulf war—ought to be good for at least two sorties per day.

That would let NATO bomb many more targets—except that approved targets appear to be in short supply. NATO officials say that Lt. Gen. Michael Short, commander of

all the NATO air forces in the campaign, has argued that he does not need the 300 extra aircraft requested by Gen. Wesley Clark, the NATO commander. "The air view is, just open up the target list," says one NATO official.

Clark and others insist they have done that, by bombing one of Milosevic's mansions, an increasing number of government buildings in Belgrade, and TV towers used to broadcast Yugoslav propaganda. NATO aircraft recently have been flying a total of nearly 700 sorties per day, about 400 more than in the opening days of the war. Attacks against Serbian forces in Kosovo have more than tripled. Concussions now shake Belgrade nightly. And 26 fuel-tanker planes are on their way, along with 10 additional B-52 bombers configured to drop conventional "dumb" bombs.

Yet this intensification of the bombing comes after most of Kosovo's ethnic Albanians have been driven from their homes, and there is skepticism even at the Pentagon that airstrikes alone will ever force Serbian troops out of Kosovo and let the Albanians return to their homes. NATO's strategy essentially has been to starve Serbian forces of fuel and supplies by attacking bridges, roads, and other supply lines, petroleum reserves, and storage sites. There is little doubt those attacks have hurt. All of the major roads from Serbia proper into Kosovo have been bombed, and at least 30 highway and railroad bridges throughout the country have been knocked down. NATO has destroyed all of Yugoslavia's oil-refining capability, and the alliance is preparing this week to begin enforcing a naval embargo against tankers bringing oil into ports in Montenegro, the smaller of Yugoslavia's two republics.

Gasped up. But without NATO ground troops to challenge them, it may be many months before Serbian forces in Kosovo actually cease to function. O'Hanlon argues that given months of warning that NATO air attacks could come, Serbian troops probably have hidden reserves of fuel inside Kosovo. And they are helping themselves to fuel stocks left behind by fleeing Albanians. NATO reports indicate that fuel shortages are causing mobility problems in some units—but that won't force those units out of Kosovo. And "long before any Serbian forces starve in Kosovo," says O'Hanlon, "huge numbers of ethnic Albanians will have starved first." Beyond that, Milosevic has been adding to his forces in Kosovo despite troubles with transportation. Clark himself acknowledged last week that Yugoslavia has been "bringing in reinforcements continually."

The ultimate battle, then, is not of guns but of wills. The natural advantage would seem to lie with NATO, which must only tolerate political discomfort, while Serbs have to watch their economy being pulverized one bomb at a time. Yet NATO's very caution, meant to keep the politicians on board, already bears the marks of a military failure. And as Congress showed last week, that's hard for any politician to support.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VAN HILLEARY

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, due to my attendance at a military funeral, I was unable to record my vote for several measures considered in the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday, June 10. Had I been present, I would have cast my votes as follows:

Rollcall No. 185: Aye.
Rollcall No. 186: Aye.
Rollcall No. 187: Aye.
Rollcall No. 188: Aye.
Rollcall No. 189: No.
Rollcall No. 190: Aye.
Rollcall No. 191: Aye.
Rollcall No. 192: No.
Rollcall No. 193: No.
Rollcall No. 194: Yea.
Rollcall No. 195: Aye.
Rollcall No. 196: Aye.
Rollcall No. 197: Aye.
Rollcall No. 198: Aye.
Rollcall No. 199: Aye.
Rollcall No. 200: No.
Rollcall No. 201: No.
Rollcall No. 202: Nay.
Rollcall No. 203: Yea.

Further, due to the cancellation of my flight, I was unavoidably detained away from the Capitol yesterday, June 14. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall No. 204.

TAIWANESE AMERICAN HERITAGE WEEK

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Taiwanese-Americans across the country. After 50 years of a strong and mutually beneficial U.S.-Taiwan relationship, the Taiwanese-American community continues to be the bedrock of that relationship.

There are more than one-half million Taiwanese-Americans across the United States. From science and education, to politics, Taiwanese-Americans have made profound contributions to the strength and diversity of this great nation.

This year also marks the 20th Anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act, which links the United States and Taiwan in friendship and cooperation. Since 1987, the Taiwanese people have possessed the right to select their own leaders, practice their religions, and speak freely. Taiwan is vibrant and democratic. The people of Taiwan and the United States share a bond in their adherence to the principles of freedom, democracy, and human rights. That bond is made stronger each day by the Taiwanese-American community here in the United States.

Today, as the first U.S. Congressman born in Taiwan, I am proud to pay tribute to the contribution and commitment Taiwanese-Americans have made to the United States.

RESTORE THE TRUST WITH AMERICA'S AVIATION PASSENGERS

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member would like to commend to his colleagues the following editorial from the June 8, 1999, Norfolk (Nebraska) Daily News. The editorial expresses support for the AIR 21 legislation and

emphasizes the need to preserve the Aviation Trust Fund for its intended purposes.

[From the Norfolk (Nebraska) Daily News, June 8, 1999]

AIR TRUST FUNDS NEED PROTECTION—AVIATION INVESTMENT ACT WOULD PRESERVE SANCTITY OF TAXES PAID BY PASSENGERS

Battles have been waged at the state and federal levels over whether gasoline tax receipts going into highway trust funds should be preserved exclusively for road construction and maintenance work. Some politicians would prefer that the funds be available, when necessary, to pay for other needed projects.

The sanctity of the highway trust funds has always been promoted in this space. Now, the same must be true for the federal aviation trust fund.

Although they may not realize it, every time a person buys a plane ticket, he also pays a tax. The money received goes into the federal aviation trust fund, which is a pot of money earmarked to fix airports, runways and other essential parts of aviation infrastructure.

This year, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the trust fund is expected to collect about \$11 billion. Left untouched, it would increase to about \$63 billion in a few years.

But there are those who don't want to leave it untouched. That's why the Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century has been introduced and likely will be voted on in Congress sometime in the next few weeks. If passed and signed into law, it would preserve the trust fund for aviation infrastructure purposes only. No diverting of funds would be allowed.

The U.S. Chamber is right when it says that passage of the act is not only the fair thing to do, but also the right thing to do.

It's fair because it would be a breach of faith to use those airline tax funds for other purposes. It's right because aviation infrastructure in the United States is deteriorating because of high usage. Neglecting to meet the current and future needs of the aviation system will only result in increased airline delays and compromised safety.

Domestic air travel has grown by 27 percent to 655 million passengers annually in the past five years. Within the next 10 years, the number of passengers served is expected to surpass 1 billion annually. The nation's runways will require rehabilitation to keep up with that demand. There also is a need to improve air traffic control systems.

Congress should do the right and fair thing and pass the Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st Century. Leave those aviation trust funds alone.

TRIBUTE TO ERNESTO MUÑOZ

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Ernesto Muñoz, an outstanding individual who has dedicated his life to public service and education. His memory was honored on June 11 during the dedication of the Ernesto Muñoz Auditorium at PS 48.

Born on November 25, 1943, in Bayamon, Puerto Rico, to Rosario Muñoz and Susana Garcia, Ernesto was one of five girls and two boys. He moved to the Bronx in 1953.

Ernesto attended New York City Public Schools, graduating from P.S. 123 as Valedictorian and Samuel Gompers High School for

Technical Studies as a member of the National Honor Society. He received a scholarship to Baruch College of the City University of New York. He is also a graduate of Bronx Community College. Ernesto was a Licensed Real Estate broker and Vice President for Milchman Enterprises Company, Inc. in the Bronx.

Mr. Speaker, Ernesto was very active in the Hunts Point community in my congressional district. From 1980 to the time of his passing, he was President of the Spofford Avenue Housing Development Fund Corporation and Chairman of the Board of Lapeninsula Community Organization, Inc. He was also a member of the Hunts Point Task Force from 1990 to 1992 and the Bronx Borough President's Citizen Advisory Committee on Resource Recovery from 1990 to 1991. In addition, he was a very active member of Community School Board District 8. He was a Board Member from 1989 until 1996; during this time, he served as President (1991–92), Vice President (1992–93) and Treasurer (1989–91).

Ernesto married Ramona Santiago on June 6, 1964 at St. John's Church in the Bronx and made their home in the Hunts Point section of the Bronx. They had four children, Eric, Rebecca, Beatriz and Wedalis, and six grandchildren, Michael, Cynthia, Marissa, Carlos, Jr., Christian and David, Jr.

Ernesto inspired me and many other young people from the Bronx. He had a remarkable passion for life, tenacity to accomplish what he set out to do, great courage and sensitivity. He passed away unexpectedly on September 10, 1998. His untimely passing has left a void not only in his family and community, but by all those whose lives he has touched.

Mr. Speaker, on June 11, PS 48 honored his memory during the dedication of the Ernesto Muñoz auditorium. What a fitting tribute.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Ernesto Muñoz and in wishing PS 48 continued success.

EVELYN ABELSON: POINT OF LIGHT

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate an extraordinary community activist, social worker, safety net administrator and public policy strategist. From micro issues involving school practices, neighborhood priorities, and area action plans to macro policy concerns and visions for improvements in City, State and Federal benefits programs, she has accumulated an inspiring record of achievements. On the occasion of her retirement I am honored to salute Evelyn Abelson as a Point-of-Light for our community and for all Americans.

A native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Ms. Abelson came to Brooklyn with impressive training as a Social Worker and significant political experience. Her compassion for the poor and the powerless is great; and her passion for organizing people for their own empowerment is equally remarkable.

Always the professional competence of Evelyn Abelson is thoroughly blended with her

personal dedication and integrity. As Director of a Mental Health Program in Brownsville, a community composed primarily of low-income housing developments, she changed the lives of many individuals; however, her work with families and groups had a widespread and lasting impact on the entire community. The Abelson lectures on family relationships attracted a large grassroots audience.

Through her work with individuals and the general community Ms. Abelson established a base of trust which made her a very influential and productive force in the embryonic Brownsville anti-poverty program. Evelyn convened the Brownsville Professional Group composed of a cross-section of professionals who worked in the community. The blue-print for the Brownsville Community Action Plan was launched when this group convened a body of local leaders who formed the Brownsville Community Council.

Mr. Speaker, as a local Branch Librarian of the Brooklyn Public Library and later as a Library Community Coordinator, I worked with Ms. Abelson to develop the Brownsville Total Action Plan which began with the election of a Board of Directors for the Brownsville Community Council. For that first election and for many others Ms. Abelson was a one woman Election Commission whose results were never challenged.

Ms. Abelson later established a Community Mental Health Clinic in Brownsville. While her professional work expanded and provided greater support for many more families, she continued in her role as a guiding community activist and policy advisor. In my changing careers from Library Community Coordinator, to Brownsville Community Council Executive Director, to Commissioner of the New York City Community Action Program to New York State Senator and finally to the United States Congress I have steadfastly relied on Evelyn Abelson's unique ability to maintain one open ear for the voice of the people on the bottom while the other ear listened and interpreted the sweep of local, national and international developments.

For this rare mixture of personal warmth, abiding compassion and generosity, as well as a penetrating mind anchored by experience and wisdom, it is appropriate that we honor Evelyn Abelson as a great American Point-of-Light.

IKE SKELTON: A MAN OF VISION,
A MAN OF PASSION, A MAN
OF THE WORLD

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I was honored recently to have our friend and colleague, IKE SKELTON, visit my district in California. This gentleman, the Ranking Democrat on the House Armed Services Committee, is known to all of us as a man of intensity but earnestness, a man of determination but flexibility, a man of integrity above all else.

Congressman SKELTON was visiting the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, the Navy's premier school for advanced technical, engineering, and strategic education. He was there to address the student body of the chal-

lenges they face as military leaders in an increasingly complex geopolitical world community. While at the school, he was presented with an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Military Sciences.

I was so impressed with the lecture Mr. SKELTON presented and the citation by the NPS Provost, Richard Elster, of Mr. SKELTON'S achievements, I feel compelled to share them with this body. I urge everyone to take the time to read these remarks and consider their meaning, especially as we struggle here with foreign affairs and military and defense questions in a troubled world.

REMARKS ACCOMPANYING AWARD OF DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MILITARY SCIENCES TO THE HONORABLE IKE SKELTON

(Made by NPS Provost, Richard Elster)

Under the authority vested by law and with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Navy and the Chief of Naval Operations, the Naval Postgraduate School is pleased to award the Degree of Doctor of Military Sciences to the Honorable Ike Skelton, Representative of the Fourth District of the State of Missouri to the Congress of the United States.

Representative Skelton understands the relationship between the nation's security and the maintenance of strong, robust armed forces. He has consistently, and effectively, used every means at his disposal to ensure that the national security policy of the United States recognizes the preeminent role of the armed forces and that the Congress provides resources to the Department of Defense and the military departments accordingly.

Representative Skelton's regard for the military extends far beyond national security imperatives to genuine, heart-felt concern for the well being of every man and woman in uniform. He understands the fundamental relationship between maintaining the most powerful Armed Forces the world has ever known and the education, training, talent, and morale of the individuals who comprise those forces. As Chairman of the Military Personnel and Forces Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, he systematically advanced initiatives to improve the quality of life and opportunities of military personnel. He supported military pay increases and sought to secure acceptance of the principle that military compensation should be comparable to that of the private sector. He oversaw improvements in military health care and attempted to secure a uniform benefit for all eligible personnel, both active duty and retired. In addition, he offered the amendment that repealed the combat exclusion for women on Navy ships.

Representative Skelton has also demonstrated that a true friend of the armed forces will recognize problems and insist that they be corrected even in the face of strong objections from the civilian and military leadership of the Department of Defense. In the early 1980s, he became convinced that the structure of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and combatant commands was fundamentally flawed. He was one of a handful of legislators who drafted the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986. Consequently, history will record that he was instrumental in framing one of the three most significant laws relating to national security since the American Revolution.

As chairman of the Panel on Military Education, Representative Skelton contributed immeasurably to improvements in professional military education. His panel found that the officer corps needs more military

strategists and that every officer should understand strategy. An avid student of history, Representative Skelton insisted that staff and war colleges strengthen and expand the study of military history and other subjects related to the development of strategic thinking. Under his leadership, the Panel also effected curriculum changes that greatly enhanced joint military education and raised the academic standards of the schools.

Representative Skelton continues to exercise great influence over the direction of military education. He has recognized the compelling need for the officer corps to be capable of meeting the challenges resulting from the myriad technological changes that are altering the way wars will be fought in the future. In early 1998, he called upon the Naval Postgraduate School to develop a new paradigm for professional military education, one that would integrate technical and traditional subjects into a single coherent professional military education course of studies.

Representative Skelton has made other significant contributions to national security too numerous to detail. Years before the current crisis, he urged that additional attention and resources be devoted to recruiting. He has consistently advocated better utilization of the reserve components. He has advanced original proposals for modifying the force structure of the services to meet the challenges of the post-Cold War period.

In summary, Representative Skelton has made seminal contributions to military affairs in the latter quarter of the Twentieth Century. He epitomizes the ideal linkage that should exist between Americans and their Armed Forces in a democratic republic animated by a strong tradition of civilian control of the military.

It is an honor to award an honorary doctorate to an American of such singular distinction. Congratulations Mr. Skelton.

REMARKS OF REP. IKE SKELTON, NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL, APRIL 19, 1999, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

Today, I want to talk to you about the role of Congress in carrying out its Constitutional mandate with respect to the armed forces. Many people do not know that the Constitution—in Article I, Section 8—gives Congress the power “To raise and support armies, . . .” and “To provide and maintain a navy.” Fewer still know that Article I, Section 8, further gives Congress the power “To make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces;”. Article II of the Constitution designates the President as “commander in chief of the army and navy . . .”, but no specific authority is granted. Many in the Department of Defense, both military and civilian, are often uncomfortable with what they regard as “Congressional interference” in national security affairs. But the system works—the Constitution make Congress the link between the American people and the military whose mission it is to protect them. And, thus, it helps ensure that there is public support for the military.

Let me give you the history of two areas, which will show you the system working at its best—The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, and Professional Military Education, commonly known as PME. These two areas are of professional interest to you, and as some of you may know, I was directly involved in Congressional efforts in both of these areas.

GOLDWATER-NICHOLS

Around the time I began my service in Congress—the late 1970's and early 1980's—the U.S. military experienced a long series of

substandard operational performances, including a number of failures and some disasters: Vietnam, Pueblo, Mayaguez, Desert One, Beirut, and Grenada.

In the wake of these events, it became clear to a number of Members of Congress, including me, that something was wrong and that a solution needed to be found. I began meeting with our military leaders, both active and retired, to discuss the state of our military and determine what Congress could do to help fix the problems. Indeed, it was not just a question of Congress wanting to help fix the problems. As I mentioned earlier, it was our responsibility under the Constitution to fix the problems.

Among those I met with was a fellow Missourian, General Maxwell Taylor, the Commanding General of the 101st Airborne Division at Normandy, and a former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Well in his 80's by the time I talked to him, but still every inch a soldier, General Taylor shared with me the perspectives he had gained in his long, illustrious military career, both in combat and staff assignments. It was General Taylor who first raised with me the issue of reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as critical to solving the problems in our armed forces.

When other distinguished military leaders and thinkers raised this same concern, I decided that the issue of Joint Chiefs of Staff reorganization needed some attention. So, I introduced legislation to abolish the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Needless to say, that bill was going nowhere, but it did get people's attention, and it did help start the debate on the need for reform.

More importantly, I got involved with this issue on the House Armed Services Committee, working with other Members and Staff who had an interest in this area. Former Congressman Dick White of Texas had held a series of often sparsely attended hearings on the subject, along with a House Armed Services Committee staffer who I like to refer to as a national treasure—Archie Barrett, a retired Air Force Colonel who had published a study on Defense Reorganization. The contributions of this outstanding American in this area are immeasurable, I am very pleased that Archie is with us today because if any of you have tough questions, he can answer them. When Congressman White retired, I inherited Archie and the issue.

As you might expect, many of the senior civilian and military leaders of the Department of Defense were opposed to any reform or reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, including Defense Secretary Weinberger, General John Vessey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and indeed every member of the Joint Chiefs. If you know your history, you will not be surprised to learn that the Navy was especially opposed. Then Secretary of the Navy John Lehman called me an “arm chair strategist” in a Washington Post op-ed article. He didn't mean it as a compliment. Then Vice Admiral Frank Kelso lectured me like a school boy when I visited Norfolk. “You don't know what you are doing,” he told me.

We did have some strong support from within the active and retired military, however, including General David Jones, the former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Shy Meyer, the former Army Chief of Staff, and Admiral Harry Train, former CINCLANT. There were even some within the Navy with opposing views. After Admiral Kelso's lecture, his boss, Admiral Lee Baggett, the CINCLANT, pulled me aside and privately told me, “you are doing the right thing.”

Here are some of the problems that Congress discovered during our hearings on the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

The joint, or force employment, side of the DOD structure was weak and often ineffective. On the other hand, the service, or input, side of DOD was so strong that it regularly stepped beyond its mission of organizing, training, and equipping forces. The services tended to dominate the joint side, often to achieve parochial interests.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff, a committee, was collectively the principal military adviser to the President, the National Security Council, and the Secretary of Defense. The Service Chiefs were often unable to fulfill their dual-hat responsibilities. Decisions on the most fundamental national security issues were watered down or not given at all. It was General Taylor who testified that the Joint Chiefs often failed to answer the mail because the Chiefs could not resolve inter-service disputes.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs was only a spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. If the Committee could not speak, or could only render watered-down pronouncements based on the lowest common denominator of agreement, the Chairman could only be an ineffective spokesman. One former National Security Adviser to the President stated that on a number of occasions he had witnessed the JCS Chairman unable to provide advice to the National Security Council on the most fundamental military issues of the day because the JCS had failed to develop collective advice. At other times, because the JCS Committee valued unanimity, the advice was so bland that it was of little value. One former Secretary of Defense stated that JCS advice was less than useless.

The Joint Staff was largely composed of non-competitive officers, often on their first staff tour. It was a dead-end assignment. The Joint Staff served the Chiefs collectively, and it was smothered with a thousand procedures that subordinated it to service positions. For example, every word of every Joint Staff paper—the source of formal JCS advice—had to be approved by every service before it could be submitted to the JCS for its consideration.

The Unified Commanders (the CINCS)—the Commanders of U.S. forces in the field on whom the nation would depend for its survival in case of hostilities—were tied down like Gulliver by constraints contained in JCS-issued directives.

The CINCS had few of the authorities you would expect a commander to possess:

They could not hire or fire their subordinate commanders or staffs.

They lacked Court Martial authority.

They could not employ their forces as they saw fit to accomplish their mission. Rather, they were required to employ forces only in accordance with service doctrine.

They did not control ammunition, food supplies, and the myriad other materials needed to conduct campaigns. Each service had its own line of supply.

Their authority over their subordinate service component commanders was very tenuous—the component commanders' principal loyalty was to their service.

Let's look at how these problems in the organization of the JCS before 1986 contributed to some of the failed missions I mentioned earlier:

In Vietnam, there were at least two land chains of command and four air chains of command reaching from the Pentagon to forces in the theater.

Desert One—the disastrous 1980 attempt to rescue hostages held by Iran—was conducted by forces of all four services. Those forces met for the first time during the operation, had never exercised as a joint team, and were led by multiple commanders responding to multiple chains of command.

In the terrorist bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, the serpentine chain of command wound through six layers of command, including officers from every service, before it reached the ill-fated Colonel commanding the Marine contingent on the ground—the Secretary of Defense; the CINC at Mons, Belgium; DCINC at Stuttgart, Germany; CINCPACFLT with headquarters in both London and Naples; Sixth Fleet Commander in the Mediterranean; and the Naval Task Force commander off the coast of Lebanon.

The tragic Beirut bombing, with 241 U.S. casualties, was the event that really convinced many Members that Congress needed to find out what was wrong within the Department of Defense, and to take steps to correct the problems. The late Congressman Bill Nichols, a highly respected Member from Alabama, was especially galvanized by Beirut. Congressmen Hopkins, Aspin, and Kasich, as well as Senators Goldwater, Cohen, Nunn, and Levin, were also deeply involved in the legislation that eventually was named the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986.

You know the major provisions of the Act, so I will not go over them in detail. However, allow me to summarize the Act's effect:

Now, the JCS Chairman, not the Committee, is the principal military advisor, a role exemplified by General Colin Powell during Just Cause and the Persian Gulf War.

Now, the Joint Staff reports to the Chairman. It is composed of talented and qualified officers, and it is possibly the most powerful staff in the Department of Defense.

Now, the CINCS poses the requisite command authorities, as was so amply demonstrated by General Schwartzkopf in the Gulf War.

Of course, Goldwater-Nichols was not the sole cause of reversing the negative trend in operational performance since 1986. It is worth noting, however, that the U.S. Armed Forces have experienced fourteen years of outstanding success in conducting contingency operations since that year. Of particular note are Operation Just Cause in Panama and, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, as I mentioned previously.

Finally, it is important to point out that it was not the goal of Goldwater-Nichols to weaken the services. To the contrary, Goldwater-Nichols was intended to push them firmly back into their legislatively assigned roles—organizing, training, and equipping forces to carry out the missions assigned to the CINCs. I do not know if Goldwater-Nichols has fully accomplished this objective, but it has made a difference.

PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION

During 1988 and 1989, I was Chairman of the Panel on Military Education of the House Armed Services Committee. I have a confession to make—I did not want to get involved in studying Professional Military Education. I thought nothing could be more boring. Archie Barrett had to use his considerable powers of persuasion to convince that this area needed to be studied. I am glad that he was successful. The subject matter was fascinating, and I believe the work of the Panel was productive.

The Panel was formed because the House Armed Services Committee perceived little or no effort by DOD to comply with a key provision of the Goldwater-Nichols Act. That provision required DOD to examine the professional military education schools and make changes where necessary to ensure that officers were being prepared to participate with other services in joint operations and to serve in joint assignments.

The Panel visited every staff college, and every war college. We held a hearing at most of them, as well as hearings in Washington.

After more than a year, we issued a comprehensive 200-page report that contained roughly 100 recommendations for changes in military education.

At this point, I had planned to discuss each of these 100 recommendations in detail. However, I know you all want to get home for dinner tonight, so I will only outline in brief what we found in regard to Navy PME.

First, the good news: We found that the Naval War College was hands-down the best service war college.

Next, the bad news: Naval officers attended at most only one year of professional military education whereas the other services took pains to ensure that their most competitive officers received two years. As a consequence, the intermediate PME course at Newport was almost an identical twin of other. I suggested that the Navy consider providing intermediate Professional Military Education at the Naval Postgraduate School. Moreover, in light of the pressing need for the officer corps of the future to be able to grasp the potential of new technologies to change the way wars are fought, and to understand how to employ technologically advanced weapons and equipment, I wrote the Chief of Naval Operations suggesting that an intermediate PME curriculum at the Naval Postgraduate School, "could interweave the technological lessons that abound throughout military history with an appreciation of what technology offers today and a perspective of the future challenges facing officers in the post-industrial era."

Recently, I learned that the Navy is planning to offer its intermediate course at the Naval Postgraduate School starting later this year. This is a giant step in the right direction, and I am pleased that the Navy, at least in part, is taking my suggestion seriously. Eventually, I would really like to see the Naval Postgraduate School, in partnership with the Naval War College, be allowed to develop a genuine intermediate PME curriculum that uniquely integrates studies intended to increase technological literacy of the student officers with traditional PME.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by giving you a charge: Make the Armed Forces a better institution as a consequence of your service. During your careers, I urge you continuously to examine your consequence of your service. During your careers, I urge you continuously to examine your service, the joint military elements, and the Department of Defense from a detached, objective perspective. As you progress in rank, use your influence to rectify flaws where you find them. Many, perhaps most, of the problems discovered by Congress in the organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and in Professional Military Education had been identified in studies as far back as the 1950's. If DOD had acted—if senior civilian and military leaders had initiated needed changes—legislation would not have been required. Change was opposed by those who wanted to preserve narrow parochial interests. The result of that opposition to change was, as mentioned before—Vietnam, Desert One, Beirut, Grenada. Do not allow your service, the joint military elements, or the Department of Defense to repeat the mistakes of the past during your watch.

The best way to avoid repeating the mistakes of the past is to commit to a lifelong study of military history. Consider how General Schwartzkopf used the lessons of history in at least three instances in his successful Desert Storm campaign:

First, the thorough 40-day air campaign which preceded the ground war recalls the failure to conduct adequate bombardment at the island of Tarawa in November of 1943.

The price paid for that failure at Tarawa was heavy Marine Corps casualties. In the Gulf War, the ability of Iraqi forces to offer opposition to our forces was severely reduced.

Second, consider the successful feint carried out by the 1st Cavalry Division prior to the actual start of the ground war. This recalls Montgomery's strategy at the Battle of the Marjith Line in North Africa against the German Afrika Corps. This action led up to the decisive battle at El Alamein.

Third, by utilizing a leftward flanking movement when he launched the ground war, General Schwartzkopf was taking a page from the book of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson at the Battle of Chancellorsville. As you will recall, Jackson's forces conducted a brilliant flanking maneuver and completely surprised Union forces under General Joseph Hooker, in the May 1963 battle.

Thank you for the opportunity to address you today. God bless you, and I wish you all in your careers.

THE CROP INSURANCE EQUITY ACT OF 1999—COMPANION LEGISLATION TO S. 1108

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity today to introduce companion legislation to S. 1108, the Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999, introduced by Senators COCHRAN and LINCOLN on May 24, 1999.

This legislation will effectively function to reform the problems farmers across the nation have encountered with the current infeasible federal crop insurance program. Participants in the federal crop insurance program will find that this legislation benefits farmers nationwide, not simply farmers in one region of the country.

The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 requires that the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation re-evaluate current rating methods and processes used in rating crop insurance rates by September 30, 2000. In doing this, the rates paid by many farmers may be reduced through these new procedures. However, if it is found that through this reassessment rates would increase for farmers in certain geographic areas, the current rating system is to remain in place. In restructuring these rates, FCIC will begin its reassessment with those commodities with the lowest participation rate of buy-up coverage plans.

Currently, farmers who buy the highest levels of buy-up coverage receive the lowest levels of government premium subsidy. This is a direct link to the low percentage of farmers who purchase buy-up coverage in my state. The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 will equalize all levels of buy-up coverage ensuring that all farmers, no matter what level of buy-up coverage they purchase, will receive equal assistance from the federal government in their purchase of buy-up coverage.

This legislation will further work to make federal crop insurance more appealing by establishing a system of discounts and other policy options from which farmers may choose. Farmers who effectively manage farm risk through good management practices which reduce the risk of an insurable loss will receive

discounts toward premiums on their insurance coverage. In doing so, the federal crop insurance program will work in a manner like other forms of insurance. If a driver has a good driving record, he or she should justly pay premiums that reflect such. In the same manner, under this legislation, farmers who rarely file insurable losses will receive premium discounts under the pilot program established by this bill.

All farmers will benefit from the reform set by the Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 as this legislation raises the basic coverage level for catastrophic coverage, the lowest unit of crop insurance protection. Currently, this basic level of protection is completely free to the farmer and covers 50% of the grower's average production history at 55% of market price. This legislation will increase that basic coverage level to 60% of the farmer's average production history at 70% of the market price. Doing so will offer an more feasible safety net to the producer should a loss be incurred.

Mr. Speaker, farmers in my home state of Mississippi assert that one of the primary problems faced by the current crop insurance program is that it is sometimes abused and exploited by farmers who seek to swindle the federal government at the expense of fellow producers. The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 will reduce insurance fraud through imposing stiffer penalties for anyone, including insurance companies, agents, and producers, who participate in fraudulent activities.

This legislation will also protect new farmers or farmers who rent new land or decide to produce new crops by assigning them a fair yield until they are able to generate sufficient actual production data. In addition, farmers who encounter multiple year disasters will be protected by being assigned a yield equal to eighty-five percent of the county transition yield for nay year in which the farmer's yield falls below that eighty-five percent level.

The Crop Insurance Equity Act of 1999 reforms the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation Board of Directors to include more farmers from different regions of the United States and creates an office to work with private insurance companies who develop new crop insurance products. The legislation goes further by reducing the amount of excessive underwriting gains received by these insurance companies.

Mr. Speaker, our agricultural producers are demanding a more feasible and more affordable federal crop insurance program. I believe that this crop insurance legislation is a sound and fair proposal which can be supported by producers from all regions of the nation.

TRIBUTE TO MS. ASHLY HUNTER
AND MS. LAURA JANE AMODEI
ON THEIR PARTICIPATION IN
THE INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL
OLYMPICS

HON. FRANK MASCARA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to honor two special constituents in my district who are the epitome of strength, determination, and selflessness, Ms. Ashly Hunter and Ms. Laura Jane Amodei.

I am proud to announce that Ashly Hunter will compete in swimming when the Inter-

national Special Olympics convenes June 26 through July 4 in Raleigh/Durham, NC, where she will swim the 25-meter breaststroke and the 50-meter backstroke. This is a dream for her that has been 20 years in the making.

Many people helped Ashly make her dream come true. In addition to her parents, Ashly's coach, Ms. Laura Jane Amodei, is also paramount to Ashly's success. Ms. Amodei has also been selected as an alternate coach to this year's games after dedicating over 20 years to the Special Olympics as a coach for the Mon Valley Swimming team of Washington Valley. Those who know Ms. Amodei and those fortunate enough to have been coached by her say she inspires her athletes to achieve maximum individual performance. Indeed, Ms. Amodei has enabled Ashly to master the very backstroke and breast stroke techniques that won her the right to compete in this year's games. It is this dedication and selflessness of special Americans such as Ms. Laura Jane Amodei that should inspire all of us to be the best citizens we can be.

Ms. Hunter won the right to compete in the International Games after a series of local, regional, and State victories, where she compiled an amazing 101 victories, including 56 gold, 31 silver, and 14 bronze. She will become the first Mon Valley resident to attend the International Special Olympics after competing for 15 years in the Washington County Special Olympics.

Whether Ashly is cheering the California University Vulcans basketball team on to victory, exploring her love of music and dance, or bike riding with her parents, who she inspired to become certified aquatic coaches, Ashly's love of life and people burns brightly. Her grit serves as testament to the joy and wonder of life to those around her. Needless to say, we, in the 20th District of Pennsylvania, are extremely proud of Ms. Hunter's fine accomplishments and the person she inspires us to be.

Mr. Speaker, I know the entire House of Representatives joins me in saluting the hard work and dedication of Ms. Ashly Hunter and Ms. Laura Jane Amodei and wishing them the best of luck at this year's International Special Olympics.

SALUTE TO POLICE CHIEF JOSEPH
SAMUELS, JR.

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor today to salute Police Chief Joseph Samuels, Jr., the first African-American Chief of Police in the City of Oakland.

Police Chief Samuels joined the Oakland Police Department in 1974 after working for a Finance Corporation as a Branch Manager. He rose through the ranks of the Police Department to the position of Captain where he spent three years in the Patrol Division. He later served in the investigative and support units of the Department.

In October, 1991, he was appointed Chief of Police of the City of Fresno in California. He has continued his civic involvement and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Oakland Boys and Girls Club, the Oakland Jazz Alliance, the Alameda County Chapters of the

American Cancer Society and the American Red Cross.

During his tenure as Oakland's Chief of Police, part one felonies were reduced by 23.3%, homicides were reduced by 54.4% and violent crimes fell by 23.2%. Citizen complaints against Police Department personnel also decreased by 44% during Chief Samuels' tenure.

Chief Samuels' other accomplishments include securing over \$30 million in state and federal grants to expand the Department's personnel and community outreach. Chief Samuels also established nine citizen community oriented boards.

Chief Samuels' professional affiliations include membership in the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the Police Executive Research Forum, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives, the California Peace Officers Association, the California Police Chiefs Association, and the Alameda County Chiefs of Police and Sheriff's Association.

Chief Samuels has made a positive and profound impact on the lives of many individuals and organizations throughout the City of Oakland and I know that the community is more safe as a consequence of his leadership.

I proudly join his many friends and colleagues in thanking and saluting him on his years of service to the community and his commitment to law enforcement.

TRIBUTE TO THE INTERNATIONAL
AFRICAN ARTS FESTIVAL

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, the International African Arts Festival, formally known as the African Street Festival, has been a cultural institution providing a venue for African-inspired culture to the Brooklyn community for 28 years. Started in 1971 as a graduation ceremony for the Uhuru Sasa School, the festival grew into a major event attracting international attention. Held each summer during the July 4th weekend, the festival features an African marketplace of over 200 vendors providing unique arts, crafts, foods, and goods from all over the world. The marketplace is the backdrop for continuous entertainment on two stages. The festival has hosted award winning and internationally recognized entertainers and recording artists.

In 28 years, the festival has grown into a major event for the Brooklyn community. Attracting over 50,000 visitors each year, the International African Arts Festival continues to grow and dig its roots deeper into the community. Among the festivals many featured events are the talent search, "Ankh" awards ceremony, living legends awards, special showcases for seniors, a parade down Fulton street, scholarship presentations, African marketplace, and world-class entertainment.

Tens of thousands of people visit the festival every year just to shop for the diverse, rare items that have become the trademark of the marketplace at the International African Arts festival. The people of New York know that they can come to the festival to find the latest in paintings, sculptures, jewelry, furniture, and goods of every kind. The shopping

atmosphere creates an economic boom attracting entrepreneurs and aiding in local, small business development. The economic benefits of the festival also results from the hundreds of jobs created by the festival.

The International African Arts Festival creates an environment of unity for the Brooklyn community. The world-class entertainment showcased at the festival represents the diversity of the African Diaspora. Audiences can expect to witness captivating performances by artists from Africa, America, the Caribbean, and Latin America on any one day. This atmosphere is further enhanced by vendors who sell delicious international foods. The friendliness of other participants and the warm feeling it fosters, under a bright sunny sky, completes the experience of Brooklyn's own International African Arts Festival.

MS. PAM HUNT IS HONORED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AS THE NATIONAL ELDERLY HOUSING MANAGER OF THE YEAR

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, today, on Capitol Hill, Ms. Pam Hunt of Pine Oaks Village in Harwich, MA, was honored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the National Elderly Housing Manager of the Year. I would like to ask my House and Senate colleagues to join in honoring her exemplary efforts to provide a safe, community-based environment for the older residents of Pine Oaks Village.

Ms. Hunt was recognized not only for ensuring that the daily needs of her residents are met, but also for her dedication in making Pine Oaks Village the place its residents call home. She has helped secure a Federal grant to enhance social services at Pine Oaks Village, encouraged residents to develop and direct their own programs, such as art shows, gardening, bridge, and quilting, organized holiday parties, and produced a monthly newsletter for her residents. Ms. Hunt makes consistent strides to improve the quality of life of her elderly residents.

Here in Congress, we are debating Social Security and Medicare reform, reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and other important issues affecting our Nation's senior citizens. It is comforting to know that while the needs of seniors are often overlooked by some—they are not forgotten at Pine Oaks Village.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 204, I missed the vote due to weather-related problems.

Had I been present, I would have voted "yes."

A TRIBUTE TO WENDY RASO OF PUEBLO COLORADO

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the dedication, hard work, and great achievements of Wendy Raso, of Pueblo, Colorado. Her efforts, in conjunction with the March of Dimes, to improve the health of babies and to prevent birth defects and infant mortality and membership in national nursing organization, have contributed to her selection as a recipient of a \$5,000 national nursing scholarship.

Ms. Raso has devoted eight years of work at the Pueblo Community Health Center while pursuing graduate studies at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. As a perinatal case manager, she focuses her time on the health of an infant before birth. Wendy's desire to better the lives of unborn children is the reason why she promotes healthy lifestyles for her patients.

Ms. Raso is hopeful that her award will call attention of Colorado's fifth-highest of low birth-weight rate in the nation. Through her work and achievements she is optimistic that Colorado can improve its birth weight ranking. Ms. Raso's determination and dedication to improving the health of unborn children have led her to pursue graduate work in Denver in order to achieve certification as a midwife.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Ms. Wendy Raso for helping to ensure the health and future of Colorado's newest citizens. Individuals such as Ms. Raso who give so much time and energy to bettering the lives of others are to be commended. I would also like to congratulate Wendy Raso on being chosen as a recipient of the national nursing scholarship, and I would like to wish her the best of luck as she continues to pursue her education and service to others.

INTRODUCTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 208 CALLING FOR VETERANS CEMETERY PLANNING
JUNE 15, 1999

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 15, 1999

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing, together with Mr. Evans, the Ranking Democrat on the Veterans' Affairs Committee as an original cosponsor, House Resolution—that would reaffirm the commitment of the United States to the men and women who have honorably served this Nation in the Armed Forces to provide reasonable access to burial in a national or State veterans cemetery. Our Resolution also would call on the National Cemetery Administration of the Department of Veterans Affairs, vested with the responsibility of providing a final resting place for America's heroes, to commence without delay the planning for the construction of new national cemeteries and other activities to provide America's veterans reasonable access to burial in a veterans cemetery.

I am appalled at the Department of Veterans Affairs' less-than-inspired goal for per-

forming its mission "to honor veterans with a final resting place and lasting memorials to commemorate their service to our Nation."

Currently, nearly one-third of United States veterans do not have the option of being buried in a national or State veterans cemetery located within a reasonable distance of their residence—being 75 miles, as determined by the VA's National Cemetery Administration. Shockingly, the National Cemetery Administration, as its fiscal year 2000 performance plan program objective, will try to provide only 80 percent of United States veterans with a burial option within a reasonable distance of their residence.

Mr. Speaker, a National Cemetery Administration goal, which does not provide 20 percent of United States veterans with a burial option within a reasonable distance of their residence, is not acceptable to me nor should it be to this House.

By VA's own statistics, the demand for cemetery space will rise sharply in the near future, with burials increasing 42 percent from 1995 to 2010, and annual veteran deaths reaching 620,000 in the year 2008. However, for some inadequately explained reason, the VA's Fiscal Year 2000 proposed budget failed to request funding for even the planning of any new national cemeteries.

Last week I joined with Chairman Stump and Ranking Member Evans of the Veterans' Affairs Committee as an original cosponsor of H.R. 2040, the "Veterans' Cemeteries Assessment Act of 1999". That bill would require VA to contract for an independent study on improvements to veterans' cemeteries. Among other things, the study would assess the number of additional national cemeteries required for the interment and memorialization of veterans who die after 2010.

Mr. Speaker, my home State of Florida has the oldest veterans' population of any state. By VA's estimate, there will be nearly 25,000 veteran deaths in the greater Miami area in FY 2000, and by the year 2010, the annual death rate in South Florida will be nearly 26,000. Unfortunately, the nearest veterans cemetery is 250 miles away. It is for that reason, on April 29, I introduced H.R. 1628 to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to establish a national cemetery in the Miami, Florida, metropolitan area to serve the needs of veterans and their families.

I would note for my colleagues that in both 1987 and 1994, the Miami area was designated by congressionally mandated reports as one of the top geographic areas in the United States in which need for burial space for veterans is greatest. Yet, as late as August 1998, VA's strategic planning through the year 2010 indicated nothing more than a willingness to continue evaluating the needs of nearly 800,000 veterans in the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale primary and secondary service area. Mr. Speaker, that is over 54 percent of the estimated State veteran population and 3.3 percent of the total U.S. veteran population.

The burial space needs of veterans are approaching a crisis stage in Florida; but Florida is not alone. According to testimony received at a recent hearing of the Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, of which I am the Ranking Democrat, ninety percent of eligible veterans are not—I repeat, are not—buried in a national or state veterans cemetery. Such hallowed grounds are simply located too far from their home and family.

Mr. Speaker, standing on the threshold of a new century as we are, it is our obligation as Members of the 106th Congress to again affirm America's long and solemn commitment to her veterans—past, present, and future—that they and their families will be provided an appropriate resting place of honor, and that the Department of Veterans Affairs will fully carry out its responsibilities to that end.