

consideration the bill (H.R. 2670) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Chairman, five years ago next month, Congress passed and the President signed into law the most comprehensive piece of Federal anti-crime legislation in history. Now, the Majority seems intent on slashing funding for the centerpiece of that bill—the COPS program. In that time, COPS has provided law enforcement agencies in my district and across the nation with critical funding to fight and prevent crime. In my district, communities in Hunterdon, Monmouth, Mercer, Middlesex, and Somerset counties have received more than \$14 million to fund the addition of 290 officers to the beat.

The creation of the COPS program was a breakthrough in law enforcement. By funding additional officers, critical technologies, and valuable training, COPS has been a catalyst for the revolutionary shift to community policing.

COPS and community policing have put us on the right track. Crime is at its lowest level in more than a quarter of a century. Violent crime is at a 27 year low. The murder rate is lower than it has been in three decades. And the police chiefs and sheriffs in my district consistently tell me that we could have never achieved this much without the additional officers and technology funded under the COPS program.

In May, COPS provided for the 100,000th officer and some think this means that we can pat ourselves on the back and declare victory. I disagree.

Crime is still too high. While we have made progress, violent crime is still six times higher than it was in 1962. And more than 18,000 people were murdered in the U.S. last year. We can and must do more.

That is why I support continuing the COPS program to add 30,000 to 50,000 more officers to the street. Every major law enforcement group, as well as the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the National League of Cities support this proposal.

Mr. Chairman, we cannot afford to play politics with the safety of our communities. Congress should reauthorize and fully fund the COPS program.

INTRODUCTION OF HEALTHY START LEGISLATION

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak in support of our nation's infants and their mothers.

As a parent, I understand that children flourish in our society when they have a healthy environment to develop and learn. But most importantly, they must have a healthy start at life.

Sadly, however, four babies die each hour and 33,000 babies die each year in the U.S. before they are a year old.

In 1992, 17 out of 1,000 babies born in my home district of Baltimore City did not live to see their first birthdays. In the most deprived

neighborhoods of our city, that rate was 20 out of 1,000!

Poor women were effectively shut out of affordable prenatal care and often had children who were severely underweight or born with birth defects that could have easily been prevented through adequate medical treatment.

However, our city's infant mortality rate has dropped 31 percent since the implementation of Healthy Start. In fact, in the two neighborhoods where Baltimore's Healthy Start Centers are located and easily accessible, the rate has been slashed a staggering 61% from earlier rates. The national infant mortality rate is also at a historic low of 7.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1997, and the proportion of mothers getting early prenatal care is at a record high of 82 percent.

Healthy Start is a phenomenal program that empowers urban communities to fully address the medical, behavioral, cultural, and social service needs of women and their infants by building strong coalitions and commitment among families, volunteers, the private sector, and health care and social service providers.

I have seen the difference this program has made in saving the lives of our children and their parents, as well as transforming the lives of the men and women who work for the program. The employees and volunteers have developed invaluable skills and a sense of pride in their service to nurture families.

As such, I will reintroduce legislation that I sponsored during the 105th Congress that makes the Healthy Start Initiative, which began in 1991 as a demonstration program, a permanent one.

I believe that as lawmakers, we have a duty to our nation's mothers and their unborn to: encourage women to make healthy choices during pregnancy by seeking prenatal care; reduce infant deaths and promote the birth of healthy babies; and provide healthy environments in which these future generations can flourish.

Healthy Start has been a successful component to accomplishing these goals and should be a permanent instrument in our efforts to cultivate healthy children.

Let's make a permanent difference in the lives of our nation's children. We owe every baby a healthy entrance into this world and each deserves a healthy start!

I urge support of my Healthy Start legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF LIEUTENANT DOUG VERISSIMO

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 5, 1999

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, after World War II, in order to continue public interest in naval aviation, Admiral Chester Nimitz formed the Blue Angels. In June 1946, this elite group performed its first demonstration. The Blue Angels have performed for over 322 million people in the fifty-three years since that first public flight. Their aerobatics, skill and precision have amazed and entertained people of all ages. However, these pilots do much more than just fly these supersonic planes. They represent the Navy, the United States Armed Forces and the entire nation at public func-

tions. They are role models to children and adults, demonstrating the values of successful people—teamwork, education, preparation and respect.

I would especially like to commend Lieutenant Doug Verissimo, a native of Massachusetts. Currently the #5 Lead Solo Pilot in the Blue Angels, Lt. Verissimo earned his commission and wings of gold in July 1989. He joined the Blue Angels in October 1996. Two constituents of mine—Mr. and Mrs. Carney Clary of Holden, Massachusetts—met Lt. Verissimo in 1997. Since that time, the Clarys have followed Lt. Verissimo's career. They relayed to me not only his eagerness to speak to children and adults and his commitment to his unit, but also his talent in talking to young people about the benefits of a good education and striving toward a dream. At this point, I would like to enter into the RECORD the letter from the Clarys documenting the extraordinary actions of Lt. Verissimo.

On August 21 and 22, Massachusetts will once again welcome the Blue Angels as performers. Lt. Verissimo will perform his naval duties and will demonstrate the kind of role model he is as he meets and greets the adoring fans of the Blue Angels. I welcome the Blue Angels to the Commonwealth, and I commend Lt. Verissimo for his hard work and dedication to the Blue Angels, the Navy and to America.

HOLDEN, MA,
January 24, 1999.

Congressman JAMES McGOVERN,
*House Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN McGOVERN: Congratulations on your re-election. I am writing you this letter per your request after speaking with you at the Worcester Airport on August 27, 1998.

My name is Carney Clary. I reside in Holden having been born and raised in the Grafton Hill section of Worcester. I am married to the former Sheila Haran (a relative of Dan Foley) and are the parents of three children and grandparents to four. I am a three year veteran of the United States Army serving in Korea from 1955-1958. For the past 35 years I have been employed as a Police Officer in the City of Worcester. I am an avid aviation fan and attend all air shows by our own and foreign military services. I am considered the guru of aircraft and their performances by my colleagues and friends.

I spoke to you about a young Naval Aviator from Falmouth, MA who currently flies with the United States Naval Flight Demonstration Team "Blue Angels", 1st Lt. Douglas Verissimo, who last year was the navigator and this year is flying the #6 opposing solo slot. Please bear with me while I attempt to explain to you why I feel this young aviator deserves the Navy Commendation Ribbon and Medal as well as nomination to the next highest rank.

A Naval Reservist Chief Petty Officer, a friend of the family, who was on active duty serving at the Plantation St. Naval facility in Worcester made arrangements for my wife and I to partake in a social brunch with the Blue Angels Pilots in the Officer's Club on Friday, June 7, 1996. Shortly before this planned event the Commanding Officer grounded the Blue Angels in what was billed as a "Final Farewell to Boston or the S. Weymouth Naval Air Show."

The time is now June 28 and 29th 1997. My family attended the Airshow at Quonset State Airport in N. Kingston, R.I. where after the performance of the Blue Angels, the pilots come to the spectator line and sign