

1974 as a labor educator, teaching worker education courses at Ramapo College, where he is still employed as a professor of economics. He was elected president of the council in 1983 and served 16 years before his retirement this year.

By bringing together affiliated local unions, Mr. McLewin was able to form a unified and highly effective voice for labor in Bergen County. Under his leadership, the council played a key role in endorsing and electing political candidates, lobbying for worker-friendly legislation and fighting against opponents of labor. He rekindled the grass roots activism of trade unionists in Bergen County in support of workers on strike, those whose jobs were threatened by plant closings or privatization, and supporting efforts to organize new unions or expand union membership. Under his tenure, the number of local unions affiliated with the Council more than doubled and participation of local unions in the Council's activities increased tenfold.

One of Mr. McLewin's proudest accomplishments was the establishment of the United Labor Agency of Bergen County, which assists union members with individual and family social service needs.

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney recognized Mr. McLewin's leadership when he appointed him to the 24-member National Central Labor Council Advisory Committee in 1995 to help develop the regeneration of labor councils across the country.

In addition to heading the Bergen County Central Trades and Labor Council, Mr. McLewin was vice president of the New Jersey Industrial Council and a former president of American Federation of Teachers Local 2274. He was a member of the AFT bargaining team and state council.

Mr. McLewin has been an active leader in the local community, serving on the board of directors for New Jersey Citizen Action, on the leadership team of the Bergen County Workforce Investment Board and working extensively with the United Way.

Born in Portland, Maine, he moved to San Diego at the age of six. He is a graduate of San Diego State University and holds a master's degree in economics from the University of California at Riverside and his doctorate in economics from Cornell University. He moved to Bergen County in 1974. He and his wife, Lynne, have been married 37 years and have two sons.

I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Mr. McLewin on his successful career and in wishing him the best in his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO IRA FREEMAN

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 13, 1999

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. SHERMAN, and I, rise to pay tribute to our good friend, Ira Freeman, who is this year's recipient of the Annual Achievement Award from Action Democrats of the San Fernando Valley. Ira Freeman has built his life on the

proposition that we are put on earth to help others. The list of organizations, associations and causes that have benefitted from Ira's tireless activism is almost as enormous as his heart. We have no idea how he has managed—for nearly 40 years—to balance his busy and distinguished career with his myriad civic and political activities.

In 1964, Ira opened Key Pharmacy—a community resource pharmacy—in North Hollywood. While building a very successful business, he also played a leadership role within his profession. From 1972 to the present, Ira has served as a board member of the Pharmacists Professional Society of the San Fernando Valley. He is a member, a past-Treasurer and a past-President of the statewide Pharmacists Political Action Committee and from 1996 to 1998 was Chief Financial Officer of the United Pharmacists Network.

A tireless booster of his community, Ira served as President of the Sun Valley Chamber of Commerce in 1985 and again in 1988. He has been a member of the Sun Valley Chamber Board for 14 years, and was appointed by Assemblyman Bob Hertzberg to his Small Business Advisory Commission.

Ira loves politics. He is a voter, contributor, fund raiser, volunteer and unofficial advisor. Virtually every campaign in the San Fernando Valley has benefitted from Ira's hard work and generosity. He has served on the Leadership Council of the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley, and is a member of Action Democrats, Democrats for Change and the Sherman Oaks Democratic Club.

Ira gives his talents and resources to charitable causes ranging from AIDS to Diabetes. He is a contributing member to The Executives, a support group for the Jewish Home for the Aging and works with the Fair Housing Council of the San Fernando Valley.

Ira has been awarded the Circle of Friends Award by the Juvenile Justice Connection Project (1987), the Doreen McDonald Award from the Independent Living Centers of Southern California (1994) and the Helen and Sam Greenberg Award, as well as recognition from the California Pharmacists and the Sun Valley Chamber of Commerce.

We ask our colleagues to join us in saluting Ira Freeman, whose selfless acts and dedication to this community inspire us all. We are proud to be his friend.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE CONGRESS THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD NOT HAVE GRANTED CLEMENCY TO TERRORISTS

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 9, 1999

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H. Con. Res. 180, a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the President should not have granted clemency. This resolution is largely another attempt to smear the policy of an Administration that has been under scrutiny for quite some time now. I will not support transferring a battle regarding our Administration's scruples into attempts to reflect a similar suspicious light on our Administration's policy.

This resolution was not reviewed by the Judiciary Committee, which is the Committee of referral. In fact, the resolution was not even submitted until one day before the vote. Most of the Puerto Rican nationalists who were granted clemency have already served at least 19 years of their sentences. Our Constitution clearly states that the President has the sole and unitary power to grant clemency. It does so because the President is uniquely positioned to consider the law and facts that apply in each request for clemency. We, as individual Members of Congress, have neither the time nor the staff to individually review the Administration's belief that the sentences were out of proportion with the offenses. For this precise reason, bills are referred to the committees that can provide such expertise. It is a shame that we would not take the time to allow expert evaluation of the level of merit behind this resolution and refer this resolution to the Judiciary Committee.

This is neither the time nor the topic for political pandering. Terrorism and clemency are matters to be taken very seriously. They are not to be used for political games. I will not support turning the fight against terrorism into a political game, and that is why I am voting against this bill on final passage.

DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 9, 1999

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2684) making appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and for sundry independent agencies, boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes:

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Chairman, the Veterans Equitable Resources Allocation (VERA) is an excellent system for directing veterans health care dollars to the states where our veterans receive their care. Since its inception in 1997 the VERA program has helped to more properly and equally distribute the scarce dollars we provide for our veterans healthcare.

My state of Florida has the second largest and oldest veterans population in the nation, and continues to suffer from lack of funding for its veterans programs. We recently had a veterans nursing home that was built and ready to care for our elderly veterans but could not open because there were no operating costs. We have a great state and we welcome all our new residents with open arms, but we must have the funds to provide for these new residents.

The VERA program was developed to more equally distribute needed funds to our veterans. The program is working and should be allowed to continue to work for our veterans. We've already shortchanged our veterans in this VA-HUD Appropriations. Lets not do it