

being asked to educate an additional 8.3 million children. At the same time, over 70 percent of our Nation's schools were built before 1960 and are now in need of major repairs.

Visiting schools in the 2nd Congressional District in Colorado, I have seen firsthand the spaces in which our children are learning and growing. Many districts can't afford sorely needed remodeling or construction of new schools, while others are scrambling to address severe overcrowding issues. And we aren't alone: School enrollment in Colorado increased by 70,000 students in the last five years. While new schools open at or above capacity, enrollment is projected to grow in Colorado by 120,000 in the next decade.

Clearly, there's an urgent need for school construction—in Colorado and in every state across the country. Thousands of communities nationwide red even now in the process of building new schools and renovating existing ones. But in drawing up construction plans, schools often focus on short-term construction costs instead of long-term, life-cycle savings. My bill would help ensure that school districts have the tools and assistance they need to make good building decisions.

High performance schools are a win for energy savings and a win for the environment, but best of all, they are also a win for student performance. A growing number of studies link student achievement and behavior to the physical building conditions. A study from Mississippi State University, for example, showed that in schools in North Carolina, Texas and Nevada, variables such as natural light and climate control played a role in improved test scores, higher moral and fewer discipline problems.

We wouldn't dream of just putting typewriters in these new schools—we would install today's computer technology. Nor should we build yesterday's "energy inefficient," non-sustainable, and less effective schools. Our kids are our country's future, and they should have the best school facilities, especially if they will cost less and benefit us all in other ways.

In short, we have an enormous opportunity to build a new generation of sustainable schools, schools that incorporate the best of today's designs and technologies and as a result provide better learning environments for our children, cost less to operate, and help protect our local and global environment. The High Performance Schools Act would start us on the road to achieving these goals. I look forward to working with Mr. MILLER and other Members of the House to move forward with this important initiative.

#### RED RIBBON WEEK

### HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 25, 1999*

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor today to recognize youth throughout the nation, and especially in the seventh district of Georgia, who will be celebrating "Red Ribbon Week," from October 23rd to 31st.

In 1985, the first Red Ribbon Week was held shortly after the tragic murder of Drug Enforcement Agent Enrique "Kiki" Camarena. Now, small towns and large cities across

America take part in Red Ribbon Week, a seven-day observance promoting drug-free communities. The message during this week is simple, "just say no to drugs." The vibrant red ribbons tied around flagpoles, street signs and school yard fences remind us together we can do something about drugs and drug abuse in our communities.

Sponsored by the National Family Partnership and observed by numerous other public service organizations, Red Ribbon Week has grown from its humble beginnings in memory of Camarena's tragic death, into a national movement against drugs and drug abuse. In communities everywhere the week is observed through rallies, lectures, essay contests and other awareness activities.

In a period such as this, where pro-drug referenda are being voted on and some public officials are calling out in favor of drug legalization, it is truly outstanding that our young people are uniting to show they still know what is right: staying away from drugs. I commend all of the young people participating in Red Ribbon Week, as well as other anti-drug activities, for taking an interest in improving their lives and their communities, now and for the future. If we are to ever win the War on Drugs, grassroots efforts such as this are surely where we must start . . . and stay.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 25, 1999*

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 523, I was late arriving on the House floor. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

#### OPPOSITION TO THE NORWOOD-DINGELL INSURANCE REGULATION LEGISLATION

### HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 25, 1999*

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to the Norwood-Dingell health insurance regulation legislation. I have listened to my colleagues and constituents to learn all I could before casting my vote. Although I am convinced that something needs to be done to redress a health insurance system that is out of balance, I have several concerns that could not be allayed.

Norwood-Dingell properly expands the ability of patients to recover damages from health care plans in court. The current bar to recovery of any damages against a health plan is inappropriate. Those plans that act negligently or are found guilty of medical malpractice should be held accountable as any medical professional would be. Norwood-Dingell, however, would open the gates to these types of suits too broadly.

Had the amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Representative HOUGHTON, the gentleman from New York, been adopted by the House, I would have voted for Norwood-Dingell on final passage. That common sense amendment would have ensured that

employers and directors would not have to worry about liability except in very rare cases. Under the vague language of Norwood-Dingell, however, there is uncertainty. Uncertainty is always a breeding ground for lawsuits, and the result would be their employers willing to provide health care to working families. Had Mr. HOUGHTON's substitute passed, the bill would have had all the protection and access provisions of the Norwood-Dingell bill, but lawsuits would have been limited in a reasonable way.

I also support the same common sense limits on suits against doctors and other professionals that have forced malpractice insurance to skyrocket, doctors to practice "defensive medicine" and raise everyone's costs, forcing even insurance companies to raise prices and reduce quality of care. Doctors should not have any greater liability than insurance companies and they also need help redressing the balance of power that is now tilted too heavily towards insurance companies, which is why I am a cosponsor of legislation such as H.R. 1304, a bill that would allow doctors to come together when dealing with health insurers.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we need to do more to protect patients and give doctors the freedom to treat their patients using their sound medical judgment as the yardstick rather than an insurance company's bottom line. Still, there are now more Americans without health insurance than there were just a few short years ago and we need to make sure that we don't raise health care costs more than necessary. I would note that the Congressional Budget Office has not done a cost estimate of this bill as required by the Unfunded Mandates Act and that none of us really know how much costs will increase and how many of our constituents will lose their health coverage. Before passing a bill that will affect nearly every American, I think we owe it to them to find out.

#### TRIBUTE TO MR. FRANK E. MATTHEWS, JR.

### HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, October 25, 1999*

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Frank E. Matthews for his tremendous work for the River Cities Combined Federal Campaign, his many years with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as well as the leadership and generosity that he has shown toward the City of Huntington and the State of West Virginia as a whole.

At the Huntington District Corps of Engineers, Frank serves as executive officer to the district engineer—a position that he has held for 19 years. He adds much needed continuity and leadership to this constantly changing field.

Despite his many responsibilities to the Army Corps, Frank still makes time for worthy causes such as the River Cities Combined Federal Campaign, where he has served as coordinator since 1966. Frank has been described as the glue that holds the River Cities' CFC campaign together. Always modest, Frank refuses to take credit for the campaign's success—preferring to attribute the success to his coworkers' generosity. However, his internal auditing system is one of the many ideas