

Families, which she eventually chaired. In addition, Pat was a member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

When she retired in 1996, Representative Schroeder was the dean of Colorado's congressional delegation. Coloradans are independent in thought and deed, and Pat is a perfect example of that characteristic. She fought old attitudes and prejudices and overcame great odds to make a difference in how women are perceived and treated. When Pat was asked why she was running as a woman, she would respond, "What choice do I have?" One of her slogans was, "When She Wins, We Win"—and so we did during the 24 years she served in the House. I am pleased to honor former Representative Patricia Schroeder during National Women's History Month.

RONGELAP RESETTLEMENT
EXTENSION

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I want my colleagues to be aware of a constructive and welcome agreement concluded this month by the Department of the Interior with the Rongelap Atoll Local Government which is a direct result of a bill passed by the House last year. H.R. 2970, "A bill to prescribe certain terms for the resettlement of the people of Rongelap Atoll due to conditions created at Rongelap during United States administration of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands." The primary intent of the legislation which I introduced with the Senior Democratic Member of the Committee on Resources, George Miller, was to extend for ten years the existing resettlement agreement initially required by Congress. Finally, the objective of Congress in H.R. 2970 was accomplished with the signing on March 10, 2000, of the Memorandum of Agreement on Implementation of the "Agreement Regarding United States Assistance in the Resettlement of Rongelap Concluded Between the United States Department of the Interior and the Rongelap Atoll Local Government".

Rongelap is an atoll in Micronesia and the home of people and islands which was contaminated by high level radioactivity during the U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands. The United States provides assistance to this former Trust Territory community in accordance with the Compact of Free Association between the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, as well as subsequent treaties and agreements relating to the current resettlement projects at Rongelap Island. The background on H.R. 2970 and Rongelap resettlement is set forth in House Report 106-404.

The Committee on Resources, which I chair, developed H.R. 2970 on a bipartisan basis, recognizing the success to date of the resettlement and radiological rehabilitation of Rongelap and the need to continue the decision-making process of the resettlement of Rongelap by the local atoll government, rather than directly by the Department of the Interior. However, the legislation was also in recognition that the Department of the Interior had done a good job carrying out the resettlement

policies embodied in Section 103(i) of Public Law 99-239, Public Law 102-154, and Section 118(d) of Public Law 104-134. Specifically, in the bill, we agreed to continue for at least another ten years the current program under which the Rongelap Atoll Local Government (RALGOV) manages the Rongelap Resettlement Trust Fund and determines its use to achieve the resettlement goals defined by the Rongelap people and address their current condition of dislocation.

On October 26, 1999, the House unanimously approved H.R. 2970, to extend by law the program for the resettlement of Rongelap which has been established by the Department of the Interior as directed by Congress under statutes authorizing resettlement assistance. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, which is chaired by my good friend from Alaska, Senator FRANK MURKOWSKI. I believe the Senate's willingness to take consideration of H.R. 2970 if the current policy were not continued by agreement between DOI and RALGOV contributed directly to the recent conclusion of just such an agreement.

What the DOI and RALGOV have now agreed to and accepted are indeed the same result as would have obtained under H.R. 2970. This outcome could have been accomplished by agreement of the parties or enactment of legislation, and I am pleased that the House action approving H.R. 2970 and the Senate's support for the underlying policy led the parties to take the initiative and agree to extend that policy for ten years as the House bill provided.

While the Secretary of Interior necessarily retains the power to disapprove use of the trust fund in a way that does not advance resettlement or address the conditions of dislocation, we believe RALGOV established a good record administering the resettlement program. Use of up to 50% of the annual earnings of the trust fund for local government operations so that it can bear the costs and burdens of administering the resettlement program has proven the efficient and economical way to carry out the resettlement program.

Without enabling the local government to support and manage the resettlement program directly, a community decision-making process and administrative structure that would duplicate the local government would have to be created to manage the resettlement process. Instead, the local government has taken responsibility for resettlement, dealing with dislocation and resettlement have become the central organizing mission and purpose of the local government instead of a program being carried out by the U.S. government. This has a democratic institution building effect for the community, and ensures a stable policy and program. This is important for planning purposes because resettlement is a long term project the ground rules for which should not change unless there is a good reason for it.

I commend the Rongelap Atoll Local Government for its successful management of Phase I of the resettlement program. Mayor James Matayoshi has improved local government operations in order to make RALGOV administration of resettlement possible. Coordination and cooperation between the local council and the Marshall Islands government is enabling far greater progress than anyone expected. With the extension of the agreement for ten years, Rongelap leaders can con-

fidently engage in long-term planning and take action locally consistent with the federally-funded resettlement plan to move forward in the process of both physical resettlement, radiological rehabilitation, and cultural recovery that is taking place under the resettlement program.

Following is the agreement by the Department of the Interior with the Rongelap Atoll Local Government, dated March 10, 2000:

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "AGREEMENT REGARDING UNITED STATES ASSISTANCE IN THE RESETTLEMENT OF RONGELAP CONCLUDED BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE RONGELAP ATOLL LOCAL GOVERNMENT"

1. With respect to implementation of the "Agreement Regarding United States Assistance in the Resettlement of Rongelap Concluded Between the United States Department of the Interior and the Rongelap Atoll Local Government", dated September 19, 1996, as amended, it is hereby agreed that Section 3 thereof, as amended effective September 29, 1999, shall terminate at the end of fiscal year 2010, unless extended thereafter by agreement of the Secretary of the Interior or applicable law.

2. This agreement shall enter into full effect upon its signature on behalf of the United States Department of the Interior and the Rongelap Atoll Local Government.

Date: March 10, 2000.

JOHN BERRY,
*Assistant Secretary for
Policy, Management
and Budget.*

For the United States Department of the Interior.

Date: March 10, 2000.

HOWARD HILLS,
*Counsel for Resettle-
ment Affairs.*

For the Rongelap Atoll Local Government.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 16, 2000 I had to return to my district in order to attend to personal business. During my absence, I missed roll call votes 53, 54, and 55.

Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on Mr. BOEHLERT's substitute amendment to H.R. 2372. I would have voted "no" on the motion to recommit H.R. 2372 with instructions. I would have voted "yes" to pass H.R. 2373, the "Private Property Rights Implementation Act of 2000".

TRIBUTE TO EAST TEXAS
LITERACY COUNCIL

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 22, 2000

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the East Texas Literacy Council, which recently was selected to be the first literacy agency in the nation to receive accreditation from Literacy Volunteers of America. The Literacy Council is well known in my