dedicated his life to improving education for the children in the Las Vegas community.

Dr. Brian Cram has spent over 34 years as an educator, serving our children as a teacher, as a principal, and as the superintendent of the Clark County School District. It is with great sadness that we say farewell to an educator who has touched the lives of thousands of students, but it is with great happiness that we wish him a joyous retirement.

Affectionately known by the students in his district as the ''Supernintendo,'' Dr. Cram's tenure will be remembered by his strong personal relationships, and his ability to bring the ''human side'' to the needs of the school district.

As a principal, Dr. Cram was not satisfied sitting behind a desk, and was happiest during the times when he was actively involved with the students' education. As a superintendent, Dr. Cram would actively participate in the educational needs of the students by traveling to as many schools possible to read to classes during the district's ''reading weeks.''

Dr. Cram was witness to the enormous growth of Las Vegas, as the Clark County School System expanded from 111,000 students, to over 215,000 students. As a self proclaimed ''poster boy for school bonds,'' Dr. Cram supported the building of 100 new schools, and championed voter approval of billions of dollars in school construction bonds for the students, teachers, and staff of the Clark County School District.

Driven by the fundamental principle that education is the ''great equalizer'' in life, Dr. Cram endorsed the School to Work program that was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, enabling students with the necessary tools to excel in the workforce.

Dr. Cram should be very proud of his accomplishments, as he has been successful in achieving his greatest challenge to meet the growth needs of the 8th largest school district in the country. His commitment and dedication is unmatched, and will be truly missed. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Cram on behalf of the Clark County community, and wish him every success in future endeavors.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am not recorded on rollcall No. 154 for the rule to provide for consideration of H.R. 3709, the Internet Nondiscrimination Act. I was unavoidably detained due to inclement weather, and therefore, was not present to vote. Had I been present, I would have voted ''yes'' on the rule.

HONORING WILLIAM G. SHEEHAN UPON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to take a few minutes to honor a special constituent of mine who after 30 years of providing senior citizens with dedicated service at the Social Security Administration has decided to retire on June 2 of this year.

William G. Sheehan, who presently serves as the District Manager of the Springfield, MA, regional office of the Social Security Administration, has decided that the time has come for him to hang up his hat and retire from a long and meritorious career.

Bill Sheehan's commitment to seniors, the poor and the disabled in western Massachusetts is well known, and his day to day input and dedication in the Springfield regional SSA office will surely be missed.

Bill started his career with the Social Security Administration in 1967 as a Claims Representative in SSA's Springfield office. In 1971, he became an Operations Supervisor, working out of the Hartford, CT, office. He continued to climb the ranks within the Social Security Administration, moving from office to office, when in June of 1980, he became the District Manager of the Springfield Regional Social Security office. He has served in this position for more than 20 years.

There is common and collective praise for the job Bill Sheehan has done during his tenure in Springfield. The usual comments I hear about Bill go something like: ''Oh, Bill Sheehan—he's the nicest man,'' or ''Bill Sheehan, he's been so helpful.'' Surely his friendly face and his cordial demeanor will be greatly missed.

In addition to his brilliant service record, Bill has had a very rich public life in the community outside of his office. He serves on the Career Advisory Board at Springfield College, and was a Board member at Independence House, a shelter for men. He currently serves on the Boards of Independence House, the Galaxy Council, and the Consumer Credit Council of western Massachusetts, as well as the Greater Springfield Senior Services Inc., where he has also served as past President and Treasurer. He is also a retired United States National Guard Lieutenant Colonel and Squadron Commander.

Most noteworthy to mention today is Bill Sheehan's commitment to his family. He is married to the former Madelyn Ferrero, his former schoolmate at Cathedral High School in Springfield. Madelyn is a graduate from Elms College and is a teacher at Forest Park Middle School.

Together, Bill and Madelyn have two children, Bill and Mark. Mark is married to Jennifer Doyle, lives on Cape Cod, and works for State Street Bank in Boston. His son Bill lives in Boston and is Vice President for an Internet company, Suppliermarket.

Bill Sheehan is a graduate of Western New England College, doing it the hard way, at night, while working during the day. Bill also sold advertising for the Springfield newspapers prior to coming to the Social Security Administration.

Bill enjoys his life in Wilbraham, keeping a meticulously groomed yard and house. He plans to spend much of his retirement at his summer home at the Rhode Island shore.

I would like to take a moment to thank Bill Sheehan for a life of public and community service. Social Security beneficiaries in the Springfield area, and all of us who have worked with him throughout the years, will miss him very much.

HONORING NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is a well established fact that non-commissioned officers are the backbone of our nation's military. Today's NCO's are given dual roles as leaders and technicians. In addition to providing operational support for their superiors and their organizations, these men and women are duty bound to provide for the health, welfare and safety of the troops under their care. An effective NCO must be mentally and physically dedicated as well as technically and tactically proficient in his or her field of expertise. Such qualities are inherent in Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios.

Widely known as Ben, CSM Palacios was born on November 11, 1950, on the island of Saipan in the Northern Marianas. He later moved to Guam where he graduated from George Washington High School. Initially enlisting with the Army on October, 1969, he underwent Basic Training at Fort Ord, CA.

Ben was destined to serve in the Army. He took a 2-year hiatus from military life in 1972 only to re-enlist in 1974 as a Specialist Four. He is now one of the Army's most senior NCO's.

All through his many years of military service Ben served both in the Continental United States and overseas with the 1st Infantry Division, the 9th Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division, and the 2d Armored Division. His assignments include serving in all enlisted leadership positions within the Armor Career Management Field—from Tank Commander to Command Sergeant Major. He also served as an Operations Sergeant in several Armor Battalions. In 1988, he was assigned as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 50th Armored Division, New Jersey Army National Guard.

From March 1994 through February 1996, Ben served as the Division Command Sergeant Major for the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA. While serving as the Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 2nd Vanguard Brigade from May 1994 through January 1996, he participated in several deployments with the Brigade. These included tours of duty with the National Training Center and Bright Star '94 in Egypt. In addition, he was also deployed to Saudi Arabia in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm as the 3–69 Armor Battalion Command Sergeant Major. Ben served as the Command Sergeant Major for the Third Mobile Armored Corps at Fort Hood in Texas for 2½ years prior to assuming duty as the United States Army Forces Command Command Sergeant Major on July 27, 1998.

Ben sought further development through professional military education. He attended the Fifth Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy and the Sergeant Major Academy. He also completed the First Sergeants Course in addition to obtaining an Associate's Degree from Fort Steilacoom Community College.

Among his decorations are the Legion of Merit (1OLC), the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal (2OLC), the Army Commendation Medal (3OLC), the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal (9th Award),

the National Defense Medal with Bronze Star, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Stars, the NCODP Ribbon (#4), the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Ribbon (#2), and the Kuwaiti Liberation Medal. CSM Palacios has also been a member of the elite Sergeant Morales Club since 1979.

On Guam and the Marianas, the personal accomplishments and success of native sons and daughters are celebrated and adopted as triumphs for everyone in the community. Through his illustrious service in the United States Army, Ben has attained respect and admiration of many. He has brought recognition, not only to himself, but also to the people of the Marianas. On their behalf, I commend Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios for his outstanding achievements.

COMMITTING TO EQUAL PAY

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today more women are working than ever before. The number of working women has grown from 18.4 million in 1950 and to 63 million in 1997. Women made up 29.6 percent in 1950 and 46.2 percent in 1997. Our nation depends on the contributions of working women. And equal pay has been the law of the land since 1963. Yet today is Equal Pay Day—the day when women's earnings from January 1999 to May 11, 2000 will finally equal what men earned in 1999 alone. 37 years later after the enactment of the Equal Pay Act, women are still paid less than men—even with similar education, skills and experience. It's time we ensure women can make ends meet and find respect and opportunity on the job.

In 1996, women were paid 74 cents for every dollar men received. That's $26 less to spend on groceries, housing, child care and other expenses for every $100 worth of work. Over a lifetime of work, the 26 cents-on-the-dollar adds up. The average working woman will lose $523,000 to unequal pay during her working life.

Ensuring equal pay for equal work is about improving the lives of families. In the United States, 99 out of every 100 women will work for pay at some point in their lives. 71.9 percent of women with children younger than 18 are in the labor force. This means the wage gap doesn't just shortchange women. It hurts children and families because many working women are the primary breadwinners in their households. In fact, nearly two-thirds of working women provide half or more of their household income, and forty-one percent are the sole source of income. Many families need two full paychecks to get by every month. One full paycheck and one three-quarters paycheck just doesn't cut it.

That's one of the reasons I am a proud cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation will help us to be better enforce the Equal Pay Act. It will put wage discrimination on the basis of gender on the same footing as wage discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity.

The Paycheck Fairness Act will toughen the remedy provisions of the Equal Pay Act. It will strengthen enforcement of the Equal Pay Act by committing more resources to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. It will improve education and outreach on differentials between women and men in the workplace, and lift the gag rule imposed by many employers who forbid employees to discuss their wages with co-workers.

I believe most employers want to treat their workers fairly. But for those employers who reward the hard work and loyalty of women with a partial paycheck, we need such measures as the Paycheck Fairness Act to put a stop to their wrongdoing.

Mr. Speaker, 37 years is long enough to wait for equity. It's time we join together and end the wage gap.

THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE S.H.A.P.E. COMMUNITY CENTER

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Self-Help for African People Through Education, Inc., more commonly known as the S.H.A.P.E. Community Center, of Houston, Texas, on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. On Saturday, May 13, 2000, S.H.A.P.E. will celebrate 30 years of commitment and service to strengthening Black families, the community and the nation.

S.H.A.P.E.'s successful growth is a result of the exemplary services the center provides and offers to area residents. Founded in 1969, chartered by the State of Texas in 1971, and classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization, S.H.A.P.E. started as a summer enrichment program for youth promoting knowledge of, pride in, and respect for their African heritage. Since its inception, S.H.A.P.E. has been involved in the creation, implementation and operation of education, cultural enrichment, employment, economic development, and crime/juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

In the spring of 1974, S.H.A.P.E. purchased what was once its main building, located at 3815 Live Oak. Remodeled in 1993, this building is now called the S.H.A.P.E. Family Center. It has an art gallery, cafe, small classrooms/meeting areas, a library, and performance space for cultural, educational and other community events. In 1993, S.H.A.P.E. purchased a building at 3903 Almeda called the S.H.A.P.E. Harambee Building which houses the business office and economic development programs. The Harambee Building has a major community space that can seat up to 500 people. Public events from town hall meetings to plays to Kwanzaa Celebrations have been held at both locations over the years.

S.H.A.P.E. has two major programs: the Family Strengthening & Empowerment Program (FSEP) and the Community Empowerment Program (CEP). The major components of the FSEP include After-School and Summer Enrichment programs for children and a Parents Rites of Passage program for adults. Forming the core of the CEP are the Cultural Arts Program (Community Festivals, Celebrations and Ceremonies), Annual Events, Economic Development, and Community Organizing, Outreach & Partnership activities.

S.H.A.P.E. Community Center has been able to provide these services over the past 30 years because of in-kind contributions and volunteers. Throughout the years, many diverse organizations, groups, businesses and governmental agencies have helped S.H.A.P.E. in its efforts to meet the community needs, and I commend each and every one of them who, over the past 30 years, has helped to make S.H.A.P.E. a model community center.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask my colleagues to join me in saluting the spirit of service that has flourished at S.H.A.P.E. Community Center over the past 30 years, and to join me in congratulating Self-Help for African People through Education, Inc., on its 30th anniversary.

THE RETIREMENT OF BRIAN HUNTER

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in honor of the retirement of Mr. Brian Hunter from the California Department of Fish and Game. Mr. Hunter has served the state of California in the Department of Fish and Game for 39 years. For the past 20 years he has managed the Department's 15 county Central Coast Region.

Brian Hunter was born in 1940 in Berkeley, CA. He was raised on a sheep and cattle ranch near Lincoln, California. During his youth, Brian was involved in 4H and the Future Farmers of America. He received his A.A. degree from Sacramento City and American River Colleges in 1961. In 1963 Brian received a B.A. degree in Microbiology and Biochemistry from Sacramento State University. Three years later in 1966, Brian received his Masters Degree from Sacramento State in Microbiology and in Wildlife diseases. He was later certified as a Wildlife Biologist and deputized peace officer by the Wildlife Society.

In July of 1963, Brian began his career with the Department of Fish and Game working in the Wildlife Laboratory in Sacramento, CA. He held several positions including Laboratory Technician to Wildlife Pathologist in charge. In January 1978, Mr. Hunter became the Wildlife Management Supervisor and Big Game Coordinator for the Sacramento office, a position he held until 1980. In 1980, Brian was promoted to Regional manager of the Central Coast region of the California Department of Fish and Game.

During his tenure with the Department of Fish and Game, Brian was instrumental in developing numerous policies and projects. He established cooperative relations with CalTrans, Pacific Gas and Electric and many other entities to help them accomplish their public works projects while maintaining and protecting natural resources. He also provided leadership for interagency coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Army National Guard. It was Brian who made the initial agreement that led to the Wildlife Conservation Board's acquisition of property at Moss Landing and the creation of the Elkhorn Slough National Estuarine Research in Monterey County, CA. Brian