

cardiovascular disease and its prevention. The U.S. Surgeon General considers over 61 percent of the American public overweight. We must continue to stress the need for including a healthy diet and regular exercise into our daily living. Education will lead to increased prevention.

Healthcare will be an important issue facing Congress this year. We must continue to provide funding for preventative education programs in addition to funding for research to stop the number one killer of Americans this year—cardiovascular disease.

I will continue to work as Co-Chair of the Congressional Heart and Stroke Coalition in order to increase the awareness of strokes and heart disease among the Members of Congress and the Administration.

#### IMPROVING CALCULATION OF FEDERAL SUBSIDY RATE

SPEECH OF

**HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, February 11, 2003*

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 141, and to commend Chairman MANZULLO and Ranking Member VELÁZQUEZ for their leadership in bringing this much needed legislation to the floor.

Passage of S. 141 will be the first step in correcting the SBA lending problems plaguing our nation's small businesses. This measure encourages the Administration to use a 7(a) subsidy rate model that would more accurately reflect the true cost of the small business loan programs to the taxpayer. Specifically, it permits the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to use a recently completed econometric model to calculate the credit subsidy rate for the 7(a) small business loan guarantee program.

Once enacted into law, this measure will allow SBA's flagship loan program to meet the borrowing demands of our nation's small businesses. Without this legislation, the program would limit 7(a) loans to less than \$5 billion for FY 2003. Currently, the 7(a) program is operating at a very reduced capacity, with a loan size cap of \$500,000, to avoid exceeding the program limitations. According to a recent GAO study, the current model has also resulted in overcharges or taxes of \$1.5 billion over the last 10 years. By limiting the 7(a) guaranteed small business loan program, we are unnecessarily restricting capital for America's small businesses to expand and create jobs.

In 2002, this crucial program backed 51,666 loans worth over \$12 billion to small firms nationwide. Last year, 21 different financial institutions in Rhode Island approved 932 7(a) loans for a total of over \$75 million to Rhode Island's small business community. In fact, 7(a) loans make up nearly one-third of all long-term loans made to U.S. small businesses. This program is important to every small business in America and deserves our continued support.

Small businesses are the backbone of Rhode Island's economy and account for more than 98 percent of the jobs in the state. As a proud member of the Committee on Small

Business, I have been extremely concerned about the ability of small businesses to start and grow in the current economic climate. Now more than ever, Congress must support the growth of America's small businesses and help stimulate the real engine of this nation's economy. For these reasons, I rise in strong support of passage of S. 141 and urge my colleagues to support it as well.

#### TRIBUTE TO LETTY L. CARPENTER

**HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 12, 2003*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the exemplary career of Letty L. Carpenter of Jefferson, Maryland, on the occasion of her retirement from the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) after 30 years of Federal service. At a time when the need for dedicated public service to our nation is more critical than ever, it gives me great pleasure to honor the commitment Letty has demonstrated to such service, particularly for the low-income and vulnerable populations served by the Medicaid program. Her commitment is even more impressive when you realize that Letty regularly has arisen at 4:00 am to make the long commute from her home in lovely, rural western Maryland to her position with CMS in Washington, DC.

Letty was born and raised in Chicago, Illinois. She received a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Illinois in Urbana, Illinois, and a Masters of Arts in Geography, as well as a Masters of Public Health from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Letty entered Federal service as a volunteer and later a recruiter for the Peace Corps, serving from July 1965 to May 1968. As a volunteer in Senegal, she introduced aural-oral techniques of language instruction to local schools to replace traditional rote teaching methods, wrote instructional materials, and also participated in laying the groundwork for a maternal and child health outreach program through the local hospital. As a recruiter in the United States, she conducted advertising and advance work for the Peace Corps recruitment drives at 40 midwestern universities and colleges. From 1970 to 1974, she worked for the University of Michigan, first as a Community Coordinator then later as a Research Assistant.

Letty continued her Federal career in Washington, DC, in 1974 when she was selected for the Management Intern Program with the Department of Health and Human Services (then HEW). Through this program, she had several rotational assignments to different agencies throughout the Department. From 1977 to 1979, she was a program analyst in the Medical Services Administration of the Social and Rehabilitation Services agency in HEW.

Letty started in the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (formerly the Health Care Financing Administration) in the Medicaid Bureau in January 1979 and has worked for CMS until the present time. She has worked in the Office of Legislation for the last 23 years, where she has played a critical role in the passage of legislation through her assistance to senior managers in HHS, OMB and

the White House, as well as Members and staff of Congress and their support agencies.

During her tenure in CMS, Letty has served nine agency Administrators and ten Department Secretaries all of whom have recognized her contributions with numerous awards, including Administrator's Achievement Awards and the Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service.

Letty is recognized nationally, within and outside the government, as a renowned expert in the intricacies of Medicaid law, regulations and policies, particularly those related to the extremely complex area of Medicaid eligibility requirements. She possesses exceptional abilities to skillfully analyze complex situations, focus attention on the key issues, develop practical options to address them, and explain it all in clear, concise and understandable language.

Letty has also skillfully trained numerous current and former colleagues in the complexities of Medicaid policy and part of her legacy in CMS will continue through the knowledge she has imparted to the current employees of the Office of Legislation and other parts of the Agency. Many people call her from around the country, from Federal, State, and local government agencies, as well as the private sector, for assistance because of her expertise in the Medicaid program.

All of Letty's colleagues in CMS and HHS will sorely miss her knowledge, insight, and can-do attitude, as well as her encouragement and lively sense of humor. Letty always has taken her responsibilities to the low-income and other vulnerable beneficiaries of the Medicaid program very seriously, but not herself. I join her colleagues and friends in congratulating her on her impressive achievements and wishing her well as she retires from Federal service. We expect that she will continue to be a valued participant in many important issues, as well as an even more active member of the Jefferson, Maryland, community, where she and her husband, Jim, have long resided.

#### COMMEMORATING THE ONE-HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SALT RIVER PROJECT

**HON. RICK RENZI**

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 12, 2003*

Mr. RENZI. Mr. Speaker, in the sun-soaked regions of Arizona, the most precious natural resource is not gold, nor is it silver. It is a priceless commodity, whose worth is not determined by its luster or quality, but by its volume and quantity. Even the world's most talented scientists are unable to replicate it, and it cannot be manufactured by machine.

It is water that sustains us and shapes our future to come. Without this gift of life, in the form of summer monsoon rain and high-mountain snowmelt, our lands would be uninhabitable and our lives impossible.

The Salt River Valley, which runs from eastern through central Arizona, is a main artery that carries within it the life-blood of the state. More than 2000 years ago, its lush banks were the home of the first people of Arizona, the Hohokam, who created an intricate network of irrigation canals that gave life to their communities.