

HASTERT, or Rep. ROB PORTMAN. According to the Congressional Research Service, they would have their pensions slashed by as much as 69 percent under cash balance plans.

During the next debate on pension legislation, I will be asking my colleagues in the House, if cash balance plans are good enough for workers, why aren't they good enough for Members of Congress?

The answer to that question, of course, is that cash balance pension conversions are not good for older workers. They need to be given a choice.

H.R. 1276: AMERICAN DREAM
DOWNPAYMENT ACT

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, we all know that home equity appreciation is one of the most important drivers of wealth creation in the United States. By helping people become homeowners, we promote long-term economic stability for our Nation. It is for this reason that I rise today to urge my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 1276, the American Dream Downpayment Act. This important legislation sets first-time, low-income homebuyers on the path to homeownership by providing help with downpayments and closing costs.

One of the primary barriers to achieving the "American Dream" of homeownership for low- and moderate-income people is the lack of accumulated wealth and disposable income. Downpayments and closing costs are traditionally the most significant obstacles that would-be homebuyers face.

In order to accumulate enough to cover downpayment and closing costs, households must consume less and save more or receive assistance from relatives or other benefactors. With rent prices skyrocketing, it is very difficult for a family to have enough money leftover for a downpayment after paying for basic needs such as shelter, health care and food. This bill attempts to assist those who have not been able to save enough money upfront but who are earning enough to make the monthly mortgage payments.

Downpayment assistance programs are proven successful in expanding homeownership opportunities for low- and moderate-income families. And the truth is, the private sector has been working, without government intervention, to assist individuals and families who lack the necessary funds for downpayment and other related costs become homeowners.

I would like to talk about one such program, based in Rancho Cucamonga, CA. The Housing Action Resource Trust (HART) was established in 1995 and began its Downpayment Assistance Program in July of 1998. HART is an established non-profit housing organization with a proven track record. The HART program has partnered with builders and listing agents to assist prospective homebuyers across the nation who qualify for a first mortgage loan, but fall short of the downpayment and other closing costs essential in purchasing a home.

The HART program has been recognized as one of the top downpayment programs in the country. The HART program has helped 40,000 families who rent across the country realize their dream of becoming a homeowner.

The American Dream Downpayment Act will complement the tremendous work programs such as HART are doing to help build communities. I urge my colleagues to make the dream of homeownership a reality for even more Americans by supporting this legislation.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. CARL
WILLIAMS

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise up today to honor a friend of the Sixth District of New Jersey, Mr. Carl Williams, a resident of Asbury Park. On Friday, April 11, 2003 Mr. Williams will be inducted into the Asbury Park High School Hall of Fame as a member of its first class of distinguished alumni. He is receiving this award for his untiring commitment to uniting his community in celebration of its achievements.

Mr. Williams grew up in the beach side town of Asbury Park, and has been a resident ever since. Today Mr. Williams is the owner of a successful clothing store and has proven himself as an accomplished businessman. Mr. Williams has been witness to many changes, both positive and negative, to the city of Asbury Park. Yet, his commitment to this community has never wavered and to this day he continues to serve his hometown and fellow citizens.

Mr. Williams is being honored by his community for advancing the educational, physical and social well being of the children of Asbury Park. Through his work in the community, Mr. Williams has encouraged the youth of Asbury Park to strive for excellence and become our future leaders and role models. He is truly an inspiration.

Mr. Speaker, through his tireless efforts, Carl Williams has fostered a sense of community and strived to help those less fortunate than himself Mr. Williams, is an extraordinary individual who is dedicated to enriching the lives of those around him and on this day I would like to ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the distinguished Carl Williams.

COMMENDING THE ACTIVITIES OF
THE AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY
UNIT 146 IN LAWRENCE
COUNTY, LORETTO, TENNESSEE

HON. LINCOLN DAVIS

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize and commend the activities of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 146 in Loretto, Tennessee. This fine organization really believes in helping Veterans, children, and the community in every way they can.

During the Holiday Season, and throughout the year, this active Veteran's Organization

visits VA hospitals, nursing homes, law enforcement agencies, and hospitals to distribute gifts and goodwill. The Legion has even adopted an indigent individual at the Murfreesboro Tennessee VA, where they send him a quarterly check to help defray the costs of personal items, as well as gifts, snacks, and cards throughout the year.

Mr. Speaker, the tireless and unselfish activities of those involved with the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 146 in Loretto Tennessee, is truly commendable. I hope you will join me in saluting this outstanding organization and all that they do.

TRIBUTE TO SPECIALIST MATHEW
G. BOULE, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to United States Army Specialist Mathew G. Boule, 22, who died on April 2 in service to his country.

Mathew Boule was a resident of a community in my district, Dracut, Massachusetts, who was serving with the armed forces deployed as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Mathew Boule was the first confirmed casualty of the conflict from the state of Massachusetts.

After graduating from high school, Mathew Boule signed up for a five-year Army tour. He learned discipline and the value of camaraderie during his tour of duty, and was proud to tell his family of his plans to someday pilot military planes.

Mathew Boule's parents Leo and Sue are proud of their son, not just for the supreme sacrifice he paid on behalf of his country, but for the time he shared with them during his life. Sue Boule eagerly and happily boasts of her son's generosity. "The kind of kid who would give you the shirt off his back," she fondly recalls. His giving of his life, along with the other brave soldiers who have lost their lives so far in this conflict, has contributed immensely to the freedom and security of the United States, Iraq, and the world.

In Mathew's honor, his parents continue their efforts to collect care packages for their son's unit, a project which has both mobilized and unified his hometown.

Mathew was a proud member of the United States Army, a loving son and brother. Mathew Boule served his family, his hometown, and his country, valiantly and faithfully. Specialist Boule died serving the country he loved, with comrades he loved and with the love of his family in his heart. Our nation is humbled and grateful for his sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time we recognize Specialist Mathew G. Boule, United States Army, who gave his life in service to his country.

A SALUTE TO JOHN ANDREW
MARTIN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 8, 2003

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to pay