

2002 (covering FY 2001), and the current series in spring 2003 (for FY 2002). Beginning with FY 2002 reports, agencies are required to consolidate their performance reports with financial reporting information in a combined Performance and Accountability report. With society's increased emphasis on accountability, transparency, and disclosure, it is incumbent on the federal government and its agencies to meet the highest standards in their external reporting efforts. Effective accountability in public service requires that agencies present a comprehensive, concise, accurate, and reliable assessment of the benefits created for the public, as well as the costs of producing those benefits. Equipped with such information, the administration and Congress can allocate federal resources in ways that continually advance government's contribution to citizens' quality of life (The Mercatus Center has developed a seven-step process, called "Outcome-Based Scrutiny," that provides a framework for comparing the results and costs of programs with similar objectives and assessing the likely impact of reallocating resources to the most effective programs. For a pilot study applying Outcome-Based Scrutiny to federal vocational training programs, see <http://www.mercatus.org/governmentaccountability>).

To help policymakers assess this year's reports and agencies improve the quality of future reports, a Mercatus Center research team evaluated the reports produced by the 24 agencies covered under the Chief Financial Officers' Act. This marks the fourth year that researchers at the Mercatus Center's Government Accountability Project have evaluated agencies' reports. It is our goal that this annual assessment will not only help to inform decision makers, but that it will also inform the American people more generally. By promoting the American spirit of competition and accountability and applying it to government performance reporting, it is also our hope that agencies can and will improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of the services they deliver.

INTERPRETING OUR FINDINGS

It is important to emphasize that our research team evaluated only the quality of reporting, not the quality of results. Therefore, it would be a mistake to conclude that the agencies with the highest-scoring reports necessarily produced the best results for the country. Ideally, an agency's report reflects more about its managers' capabilities than just their ability to write reports. Instead, a high scoring report reflects an agency's ability to translate what it does into understandable and meaningful results that Americans can appreciate.

Similarly, it would also be inappropriate to draw policy conclusions from our analysis. We offer no recommendations on whether the federal government should or should not be engaged in its current menu of activities.

So what do the findings in this study really mean? By assessing the quality of agency reports, we are trying to evaluate the agencies that are supplying the information that Congress and the public need to make informed funding, budgeting, and policy decisions. An additional word on information quality is also in order. Our researchers assessed the quality of each report's disclosure of data verification and validation procedures. In the interest of producing a timely study, we did not, however, verify the performance information cited in each agency's report. Given the importance of accurate data for sensible decisions, we believe that verification and validation should be a high priority for Inspectors General, Congress, the General Accounting Office, and the Office of Management and Budget.

For the complete report, visit the Mercatus Center's Government Accountability Project website at www.governmentaccountability.org.

HONORING DONALD SCHNEIDER

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Donald Schneider, who served as the Chief Clerk of the Wisconsin State Senate for 26 years.

As the longest-serving Chief Clerk in Wisconsin's history, Don Schneider worked under three Democrat and three Republican majorities. Although it is impossible to quantify his rich legacy, I honor him most for three reasons: his dedication to bring cutting edge technology to the Senate, his expertise in legislative organization, and his non-partisan cooperation in serving the body.

During his tenure, Schneider was instrumental in the modernization and automation of the Senate. The Senate's increased technology allowed for increased efficiency and increased public accessibility. In a world of ever-advancing technology, Schneider's commitment of keeping the Senate technologically current was crucial to the performance of its function.

Secondly, Schneider is recognized both within Wisconsin borders and beyond for his authority in the fields of legislative organization and legislative institution development. This reputation extends nationally and internationally, culminating in his acceptance of the Joseph A. Beek Distinguished Service Award from the American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries in 1998.

Perhaps most importantly, Schneider is honored for his professionalism and nonpartisanship. His collaboration with both sides of the aisle induced the respect that Republicans and Democrats alike feel for him, translating into his lengthy tenure under both majorities. Mr. Schneider's character served to advance and facilitate the legislative function of the Senate both on the floor and behind the scenes.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 23, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2800) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to thank the Committee for including in the report on the Fiscal Year 2004 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill language reiterating its support for the East Central European Scholar-

ship Program (ECESP). This program has operated successfully for a number of years at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and has had positive impacts not only in the various Balkan nations on which it is focused, but also on the La Crosse campus of the University of Wisconsin.

As we look at the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan today, it is clear how critically important it is that we work to ensure that nations taking shape in the aftermath of conflict have the human resources to sustain democratic institutions and free market economies. Over the past 14 years, ECESP has conducted technical training for democratic institution building, health care administration, and financial sector management, among other fields. The program's efforts have resulted in strengthened skills and understanding for over 1200 administrators, managers and government leaders. ECESP alumni include members of national parliaments and the European Council, bank examiners of central banks, hospital administrators as well as administrators of nongovernmental and non-profit organizations.

From 1989 until 1998, ECESP focused its work in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, assisting in the systemic reforms required for integration into the European community. Since 1998, ECESP has been engaged in similar efforts focusing on Albania, Bulgaria, Macedonia and Romania. I look forward to working with USAID, institutions of higher learning, and my colleagues in Congress to help expand this program model in the former Soviet Republics and Central Asia, as recommended by a recent USAID funded evaluation, and explore similar possibilities in the Middle East.

Over the last decade, the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, through ECESP, has been able to provide training to some 300 financial managers from all of the participating ECESP countries. That training has provided these managers with expertise in bank risk management, financial management, and supervision of financial institutions, all of which are critically important to stable market economies. At the same time, the program has enabled U.S. students on the UW-La Crosse campus to benefit from interaction with the international students and a greater awareness of international perspectives in these areas.

USAID is currently considering a new multiyear agreement with the Center for Intercultural Education and Development based at Georgetown University, which manages ECESP. As that agreement is finalized, I strongly encourage USAID and the Department of State to maintain the current level of support for this important and successful program. ECESP is an important component in our efforts to stabilize the Balkan region, and it is a commitment that we need to see through.

DISPLACED PERSONS FACING SERIOUS OBSTACLES IN RUSSIA

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 24, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, today I want to bring to the attention of colleagues two situations concerning internally