

Additionally, this bill would correct inequities resulting from the court case *Wassenaar v. Office of Personnel Management (OPM)*, regarding benefits for survivors of law enforcement officers and firefighters who die as federal employees.

Under current CSRS and FERS statutes, certain employees immediately qualify for an enhanced annuity if separated from service after reaching age 50 and completing 20 years of service. This enhanced annuity, however, requires that these employees make retirement contributions that are 0.5 percent higher than those of the average employee.

Some employees are forced to retire due to disability, or involuntary separation (not for cause), before reaching age 50. In these cases, employees receive only a regular annuity even if he or she has had 20 years of service. This legislation remedies this problem by providing enhanced annuities to all employees who have given 20 years of service. Those forced to retire, at any age, due to involuntary separation or disability are covered by this legislation. The bill also allows for the refund of the additional 0.5 percent retirement contribution, with interest, when employees in these occupations retire or die before attaining eligibility for the enhanced annuity.

During the 106th and 107th Congresses, many federal employees contacted my office stating their concerns about the retroactive language in the bill. I listened to their concerns and worked with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to address this issue. This bill is no longer retroactive. I am extremely pleased this bill will capture federal employees from the day of enactment.

HONORING DR. ANNAMARIE ROEPER

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 8, 2003*

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to offer my congratulations to Dr. Annamarie Roeper, a beloved educator, innovator, school administrator, and model global citizen.

After Annamarie and her husband, George, fled the horrors of Holocaust in Germany, they set out to provide a safe place for children to grow and become intelligent, sensitive contributors to society. Arriving in the United States in 1941, they founded the Roeper School in Detroit, which expanded to include additional schools in Bloomfield Hills and Birmingham. For over forty years, these two noted German scholars ran the Roeper City and Country School which became a well-known school for gifted children.

The school's unique curriculum is based on Dr. Roeper's evolving philosophy that growth and learning is driven by a child's inner self, not just intellect. In nurturing children's creativity, Dr. Roeper challenges students to respect inherent dignity, value differences, and develop a global sense of the world around them.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in applauding Annamarie Roeper, who will celebrate her 85th birthday with many of

Roeper's students, faculty and friends on October 12th at the Upper School in Birmingham. Her vision for educational excellence and her dedication to foster socially responsible citizens is her legacy to the school she founded.

92ND TAIWAN NATIONAL DAY

HON. TOM COLE

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 8, 2003*

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, on October 10, 2003, one of our largest trading partners, the Republic of China on Taiwan, will be celebrating the 92nd anniversary of its National Day. I wish to join my colleagues in the United States Congress in sending best wishes to the twenty-two million residents of this lovely island. I also commend President Chen Shui-bian and Vice President Annette Lu as they continue to lead Taiwan to greater economic prosperity at home and greater participation in international activities abroad.

Just like our 4th of July, October 10 marks the beginning of a fantastic story of economic, social and political success that has culminated in Taiwan becoming a vibrant democracy in the Pacific Region. These are exciting times in the history of relations between the United States and Taiwan.

Mr. Speaker, on this 92nd occasion of the Republic of China's National Day, it is important to remember that Taiwan has a strong relationship with the United States, and we hope this relationship will continue to flourish and grow in the years to come.

INTRODUCING THE DATABASE AND COLLECTIONS OF INFORMATION MISAPPROPRIATION ACT

HON. W.J. (BILLY) TAUZIN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 8, 2003*

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, two and one-half years ago, Chairman SENSENBRENNER and I agreed to work collectively to produce a database protection bill. Previous attempts at producing legislation resulted in various stalemates between the two Committees. When I took the gavel at Energy and Commerce and Chairman SENSENBRENNER took over at the Judiciary Committee, we decided we would work through this issue in a different way. It has been a long process—it was no easy chore harmonizing a Judiciary-favored copyright approach and a Commerce-favored misappropriation approach.

The two Committees have worked amicably towards the bill we are introducing today. This is a credit to the members on both Committees, and I have been delighted to see the cooperation and respect between our two Committees grow over the last few years. I would like to commend Chairman SENSENBRENNER, in particular, for his leadership and commitment through this process.

This bill is one of compromise. Through the course of the negotiations, I won some issues

and lost some issues. As we move forward in the legislative process, I will continue to invest time and effort to improve the legislation and ensure my lingering concerns are addressed. In doing so, my focus will remain on protecting the free flow of information so important to our information economy. I look forward to working with the Judiciary Committee, my colleagues on the Energy and Commerce Committee, and all interested parties to improve this legislation.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE HEALTH BENEFITS GLAUCOMA SCREENING ACT

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 8, 2003*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to reintroduce the "Federal Employee Health Benefits Glaucoma Screening Act."

This bill ensures that federal employees will have access to annual glaucoma screenings. Specifically, this bill ensures that a contract or plan cannot be approved unless it provides coverage for such screenings for persons determined to be at high risk for glaucoma, individuals with a family history of glaucoma, and individuals with diabetes. The service must be furnished by or under the supervision of an optometrist or ophthalmologist who is legally authorized to perform such services in the state where the services are furnished.

Glaucoma is a specific pattern of optic nerve damage and visual field loss caused by a number of different eye diseases which can affect the eye. It is one of the leading preventable causes of blindness in America. I have read that blindness is the number three health fear for most Americans, right behind heart disease and cancer. Blindness is particularly terrible because it can strike healthy people, people in the prime of their lives.

While it can affect Americans of all ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, glaucoma most frequently attacks diabetics, people suffering from hypertension, and African Americans. There is no cure for glaucoma—but it can be prevented if caught early enough. Through a comprehensive screening, an eye care professional can determine how well one can see at various distances, check fluid pressure in eyes, inspect optic nerves for signs of damage and, if needed, measure one's visual field to see if there is a loss of side vision (one of the earliest findings in glaucoma).

I believe this measure will encourage persons to be screened for glaucoma, in turn, increasing the number of persons with early signs of glaucoma who can be treated by eye care professionals before blindness sets in—recognizing the importance of glaucoma screenings as an effective way to educate and prevent glaucoma or blindness.

Finally, I would like to thank Bud Grant, the Friends of the Congressional Glaucoma Caucus Foundation, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and Dr. Eve J. Higginbotham, who is Maryland's own nationally known expert on glaucoma, for all they are doing to preserve America's vision.

Please join me in cosponsoring this legislation that will help in the fight against blindness.