

receiving free or reduced price lunches, the National School Lunch Program often times provides the most nutritious meal or the only meal that some children receive in a day.

We celebrate another year of this Program because it has helped combat the growing hunger and poverty levels among children in our country. According to the Food Research and Action Center, National School Lunch Program has grown from about 7.1 million children participating in 1947 to over 27.2 million in the 2001–2002 school year. The program operates in more than 99,800 public and non-profit private schools and residential childcare institutions, with over 187 billion lunches having been served.

National School Lunch Program is just one step in developing our children into the prosperous, successful individuals we want them to become. The Program's Team Nutrition Initiative focuses on teaching and motivating children to make food choices that enhance their energy, growth, and potential. In addition, the Program is vitally important to achieving our educational goals. Poorly fed children have more difficulty learning, are less attentive in class, and suffer more chronic problems, such as absenteeism and tardiness, than children who are properly nourished. By making nutritious meals available to all school children, the National School Lunch Program will help us ensure that we leave no child behind. According to the Food Research and Action Center, proper nutrition improves a child's behavior, school performance, and overall cognitive development. All in all, properly nourished children more actively participate in the education experience, which benefits them, their fellow students, and the entire school community. Studies have shown what we already have known—that healthy school meals play a critical and positive role in students' development and learning process. Unfortunately, we have a double-sided battle to fight, with regards to mal-nourishment and obesity. A peer-reviewed study conducted by academic researchers at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, found that girls in food insecure households had a significantly lower risk of being overweight if they participated in the National School Lunch Program. The findings suggest that participation in these Federal child nutrition programs can combat our growing problems with obesity in children.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, in 2000, 10.5 percent of all U.S. households, representing 20 million adults and 13 million children, were "food insecure" because of lack of resources. In 2001, Illinois reported 9.2 percent of households are food insecure, which represents 3,239,229 children under the age of 18. Thanks to the National School Lunch Program, there are over 4,446 schools participating in Illinois, with over 1,083,548 students that benefits from it. Specifically in Chicago Public Schools, over 350,000 students are registered in the Program.

If President Truman found this to be important to our national security in 1946, we should continue his vision in 2003 by continuing to support National School Lunches. As the Committee on Education and the Workforce, of which I serve, continues to examine this program during its reauthorization, I will continue to ensure that good nutrition is promoted among our children, thus helping them

to become healthier, positive, citizens within our country.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND FELIX SANTANA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 16, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of the late Reverend Felix Santana, a man who has served his faith and community tirelessly throughout his life. On October 17, 2003, the Latino American Committee of Monmouth County will honor the Reverend with an award for his contributions as a role model and mentor for Latino youths.

Reverend Santana was born in Humacao, Puerto Rico on August 21, 1924. In 1948 he moved to northern Indiana where he worked in the steel industry for two years. When America became entrenched in the Korean War, Reverend Santana heroically served his country in the U.S. Army and was decorated with the United Nations Service Medal. After the war, and a productive career in design, the Reverend entered the Bangor Theological Seminary in Maine.

After completing his studies, Reverend Santana and his family settled down in Monmouth County, New Jersey. It was then that Reverend Santana established the first Hispanic Ministry in Asbury Park, New Jersey. In addition, he led similar efforts in Ossining, New York, Plainfield, and Jersey City, New Jersey. However, the Reverend's commitment did not end at his religious responsibilities. Reverend Santana made time to serve Hispanics and others in his community. He helped set up an anti-poverty agency called "Checkmate, Inc" as was actively involved with the Puerto Rican Civic Association and the freeholders of New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, Reverend Santana believed in serving his community. The legacy that he has left behind will continue to serve those he has given so much of himself too. I ask that my colleagues rise and join me to honor this most respectable man, Reverend Felix Santana.

PENSION FUNDING EQUITY ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 8, 2003

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 3108, the Pension Funding Equity Act of 2003, a bill that passed this body last week, but also to express my dismay that a non-controversial, bipartisan provision was stripped from that bill before this House had an opportunity to vote for it. It is my hope that this provision, which would stabilize small business defined benefit pension plans, can be included in any conference report that this House may be asked to consider this year.

The provision, known as Section 415, would have replaced the 30-year Treasury bond rate with a fixed interest rate of 5.5 percent for pur-

poses of the maximum cap on benefits under Internal Revenue Code section 415. In the case of a small business defined benefit plan, the maximum cap on benefits can have an enormous impact on funding, due to the small number of participants. The 30-year Treasury bond rate that business must currently use to calculate funding is extremely volatile, leading to unpredictable funding requirements. For example, just last year between March and September (only 6 months), the 30-year rate fluctuated by almost a full percentage point—96 basis points—resulting in funding obligations for a benefit that varied by as much as \$140,000. That may not be much to a large company, but it is significant to a small business.

The cost of this unpredictability is choking off capital investments, new hires, higher wages, or better health care. The requirement to use an obsolete standard is depriving our economy of desperately needed capital at a time when our businesses and our workers need it most.

The small business provision has bipartisan support both in the House and Senate, it has no impact on current rules for calculating lump sums for rank-and-file participants, and there does not appear to be any substantive objections to its inclusion. So I am dismayed that it would have been taken out of the larger, two year pension fix.

I trust that as this process moves forward—in conference if there is an opportunity—we will be able to reattach this important small business provision to the bill.

RECOGNIZING MR. DIMAS MONTALVO

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 16, 2003

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to laud the accomplishments of Dr. Dimas Montalvo, a longtime community activist. Mr. Montalvo is the founder of the Latino American Committee and a tremendous supporter of various Latino-related programs. Friends and neighbors refer to him as a hometown hero for his many accomplishments and his longstanding service to the Latino community.

In search of a better future, Mr. Montalvo left Puerto Rico for New Jersey in 1957. He settled in Long Branch in 1959 where he began working at the Fort Monmouth Army Base barbershop before opening his own shop in 1965. Following the opening of his business, Mr. Montalvo started attending classes in the hopes of earning his GED and improving his English skills.

In 1969 Mr. Montalvo's barbershop was relocated and another business, Montalvo's Rooming House, was established in conjunction with the shop. Currently, he is still running both businesses from the same location, which has become a site for community outreach. It is there that Mr. Montalvo counsels people from all walks of life with various questions, concerns and problems. Over the years, Mr. Montalvo has become very active in numerous community organizations, including the Monmouth Community Action Program and the Spanish Fraternity of Monmouth County.