machinery. The company is the third largest commercial lines insurer and has been rated the second largest writer of homeowners and auto insurance through independent agents.

I applaud Travelers Property Casualty for their long-standing dedication to serving the people of Western Pennsylvania and all of their insurance needs.

I ask all of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in honoring this successful business for their 100 years of service.

TRIBUTE TO THE FRED C. FISCHER LIBRARY

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Fred C. Fischer Library of Belleville, Michigan, as it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

Serving the residents of Belleville, Sumpter Township, and Van Buren Township, the Fischer Library was built in 1953, when the public library outgrew its space at the J.C. Pullen Furniture store, and 3 other locations.

From 1953 until 1992 the Fred C. Fischer Library remained the quaint and homey 3,500 square foot library it was built to be. Meanwhile, the population of the area grew from 12,400 to over 35,000. The library became increasingly crowded and more bookshelves were needed to accommodate the growing collection.

Thanks to contributions from the Belleville Rotary Club's Charles B. Cozadd Foundation, the Simester estate, many smaller individual contributions, federal grants, and the commitment of the City of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren Townships, the Fischer Library was able to triple the size of the library, expand its catalog to include just about everything from books to DVDs, as well as offer public internet access, and events for patrons of all ages.

The Fred C. Fischer Library continues to live up to its mandate of ''making the library an attractive place for all users, young people particularly.''

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in thanking the Fred C. Fischer Library for its outstanding service to the people of Michigan, and wish them well in the next 50 years.

A BILL TO CLARIFY THE TAX TREATMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS IN AID OF CONSTRUCTION

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation today to ensure that burdensome regulation does not add unnecessarily to the cost of housing.

The need for this legislation is brought about because the Department of Treasury has issued regulations to provide guidance on the definition of contributions in aid of construction, so called CIAC, as enacted under the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996. Despite the fact that Congress specifically removed language concerning ''customer services fees'' in its amendment in 1996, the Department added the language back into the proposed regulation specifying that such fees are not CIAC. They then defined the term very broadly to include service laterals, which traditionally and under the most common state law treatment would be considered CIAC.

Because state regulators require all of the costs of new connections to be paid up front, these regulations will force water and sewerage utilities to collect the federal tax from homeowners, builders, and small municipalities. Because they collect it up front, the utility is forced to ''gross up'' the tax by collecting a tax on the tax on the tax, resulting in an over 55 percent effective tax rate.

This bill will clarify prospectively that water and sewerage service laterals are included in the definition of contributions in aid of construction (CIAC). It clarifies current law by specifically stating that ''customer service fees'' are CIAC, but maintains current treatment of service charges for stopping and starting service (not CIAC).

Mr. MATSUI and Mrs. JOHNSON along with many of our colleagues here in the chamber, worked hard over the course of a number of years to restore the pre-1986 Act tax treatment for water and sewage CIAC. In 1996, we succeeded in passing legislation. It was identical to pre-1986 law with three exceptions. Two of the changes were made in response to a Treasury Department request. The third removed the language dealing with ''service connection fees'' primarily because of potential confusion resulting from the ambiguity of the term. The sponsors of the legislation were concerned that the IRS would use this ambiguity to exclude a portion of what the state regulators consider CIAC.

As part of our efforts, we developed a revenue raiser in cooperation with the industry to make up any revenue loss due to our legislation, including the three changes. This revenue raiser extended the life, and changed the method, for depreciating water utility property from 20-year accelerated to 25-year straight-line depreciation. As a consequence of this sacrifice by the industry, our CIAC change made a net $274 million contribution toward deficit reduction.

What is most important to keep in mind is that this unnecessary tax of over 55 percent is passed directly on to homeowners and local governments. I urge my colleagues to join with us in sponsoring this important legislation in order to ensure that American homeowners do not face further burdens.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEE STUDENT LOAN ASSISTANCE ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 28, 2003

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I commend my colleagues for this needed legislation, which ensures the federal government's deep commitment to a highly trained, diverse workforce. But we should go even further. In order to best maximize federal government resources, we should encourage competition in all aspects of the student loan program, including consolidation loans.

In order to instill such competition, we will need to make sure that during the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, which is currently moving through the Education and the Workforce Committee, we repeal the single holder rule. I want to thank Chairman BOEHNER and Congressman MCKEON, for their efforts to keep college costs under control during consideration of this important legislation. It will be part of my commitment to them as well as Federal agencies, students and families everywhere that they can have the benefit of competition from the more than one thousand qualified lenders in the program when they consolidate their loans and, thus, allow them to take advantage of historically low fixed interest rates.

A TRIBUTE TO REV. ROBERT M. WATERMAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 2003

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Rev. Robert M. Waterman for his devout commitment to his congregation and dedication to his community.

Rev. Robert M. Waterman, the son of a Pentecostal preacher, was born in Brooklyn, New York. As a young man, he was reared in Hemingway, South Carolina, and steeped in both the Pentecostal and Baptist traditions.

In 1985, he was licensed to preach by Abundant Life Tabernacle. Rev. Waterman also served as the Associate Pastor and Youth Pastor at Union Baptist Church in White Plains, New York under the pastoral guidance of Reverends Robert L. Mason and Verlin D. Williams. He began his work at Antioch on November 4, 2001, and was officially installed as the church's reverend in May of 2003. During this time, Reverend Waterman graduated from the New York Theological Seminary with a Master of Divinity.

Rev. Waterman has brought many talents to Antioch including a youthful exuberance, a commitment to getting the job done, and a quiet yet ebullient spirituality. With his leadership, new seats and carpet have been installed in the balcony, an after school homework program was created, the Wednesday night bible study was revived, and a large influx of new worshippers have come to the church. Since his installation, Reverend Waterman has worked closely with the youth ministry, forming Teens United for Fellowship (TUFF). He has also established leadership classes and retreats, reinstituted the Christian education department, spearheaded the purchase of a state-of-the-art sound system in the sanctuary, and revived the Antioch Community Service program for youth and seniors. He has also been instrumental in the building fund for the elevator project.

Spiritually, Reverend Waterman is known as ''The Preacher of Thunder'' as he encourages his congregation to know God so that hearts, and thereby lives, can be changed. His commitment to Antioch is demonstrated by his relocation to the Bedford-Stuyvesant community.

As Antioch Baptist Church celebrates its 85th anniversary, the church is stronger than