

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., used to say that "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?" Let me tell you, the dedicated staff members at the United Community Health Center have answered that question in powerful ways. They have committed themselves to providing high-quality health care to all comers, regardless of ability to pay. All are welcomed equally. All are served with excellence.

This is why, as ranking member on the education and health appropriations subcommittee, I am 100 percent committed to securing appropriate funding for community health centers all across America. One thing I know for certain: Every dollar Congress appropriates for centers like the one in Storm Lake is a dollar spent wisely and frugally. It never ceases to amaze me how their staff members are able to do so much—and to serve so many people—with such limited resources.

I daresay that nobody in the health care profession faces greater challenges than those who choose to work in community health centers—challenges including chronic illness, cultural and linguistic differences, geographical barriers, homelessness, and on and on. Nothing stops these superb professionals.

And one more thing: community health centers have a well-deserved reputation for caring and kindness. In some ways, their physicians and nurses are a throwback to another era. They offer a direct and personal style of health care. They follow up. They care about prevention and wellness.

So I am deeply grateful to executive director Renea Seagren, to board chair Mark Prosser, and all the other members of the staff and board at the United Community Health Center. And also to founding board member Larry Rohret, whose dedication to improving the lives of those in greatest need was instrumental in establishing the health center. I was saddened that Larry did not live to see the health center open its doors.

These devoted people work their hearts out to provide the very best health care to some of our most needy citizens. I deeply appreciate their passion, their compassion, and their dedication to public service.

Mr. President, earlier this year, I had the opportunity to visit the newly opened Community Health Center of Fort Dodge in north-central Iowa. I had been fortunate to secure \$280,000 for planning and equipment at the facility, and I was eager to see how these resources are being put to use.

As I toured the facility and talked with staff, I was freshly reminded of the extraordinary public service rendered by community health centers all across the United States. But the center in Fort Dodge is truly exceptional. Thanks to their new community health center designation, the folks, there, were able to transition from two free clinics operating very much part time,

to a full-time, comprehensive primary care center serving all of Webster County.

And the staff members—from physicians to nurses to custodians—are truly an inspiration. They clearly have a special passion for their work, and they take pride in the fact that they are providing first-rate health care to some of the most underserved people in my state.

Mr. President, several years ago, I encouraged leaders in the Fort Dodge community to apply to for community health center designation. I remember visiting a free clinic being operated by St. Mark's Episcopal Church back in 2003 and meeting a woman who was in such pain from a toothache that she had removed her own tooth with a hammer and screwdriver. No human being should have to resort to such a crude remedy—certainly not in the United States of America. And thanks to the new center in Fort Dodge, those kinds of desperate measures are a thing of the past.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., used to say that "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?" Let me tell you, the dedicated professionals at the Community Health Center of Fort Dodge have answered that question in powerful ways. They have committed themselves to providing high-quality health care to all comers, regardless of ability to pay. All are welcomed equally. All are served with excellence.

This is why, as ranking member on the education and health appropriations subcommittee, I am 100 percent committed to securing appropriate funding for Community Health Centers. One thing I know for certain: Every dollar Congress appropriates for centers like the one in Fort Dodge is a dollar spent wisely and frugally. It never ceases to amaze me how their staffs are able to do so much—and to serve so many people—with such modest resources.

I daresay that nobody in the health care profession faces greater challenges than those who choose to work in community health centers—challenges including chronic illness, cultural and linguistic differences, geographical barriers, homelessness, and on and on. Nothing stops these superb professionals.

And one more thing: community health centers have a well-deserved reputation for caring and kindness. In some ways, their physicians and nurses are a throwback to another era. They offer a direct and personal style of health care. They follow up. They care about prevention and wellness.

So I am deeply grateful to executive director Kathy Wilkes to Randy Kuhlman and Father Steve Hall, who spearheaded the CHC designation effort; to board chair Craig Johnsen and the other board members; and to all the wonderful staff members at the Community Health Center of Fort Dodge. They work their hearts out to

provide the very best health care to all who pass through their doors. I deeply appreciate their passion, their compassion, and their dedication to public service.●

RECOGNIZING CONCHY BRETOS

● Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. President, today I congratulate Ms. Conchy Bretos of Miami, FL, recipient of the 2006 Purpose Prize. This new national award was initiated this year by Civic Ventures, a nonprofit organization dedicated to generating ideas and programs to help society achieve the greatest return on the experience of older Americans.

After a varied career in housing, marketing, health, women's issues and government, Conchy Bretos became committed to doing something about the thousands of low-income elders and disabled adults who were not getting the service they needed to stay in their homes.

She became the driving force behind the Helen Sawyer building in Miami, the Nation's first public housing project to offer assisted-living service. Her efforts have resulted in the creation of similar services in 40 public housing projects in a dozen States, allowing many older adults to maintain their independence while they receive the medical care they need.

I want to recognize the role of the Purpose Prize itself in changing our society's view of aging. America's growing older population is one of our greatest untapped resources, and we need to do everything possible as a society to recognize the great contributions they can make.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and treaties which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

REPORT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA'S 2007 BUDGET REQUEST ACT—PM 57

The PRESIDING OFFICER laid before the Senate the following message from the President of the United States, together with an accompanying report; which was referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs:

To the Congress of the United States:

Pursuant to my constitutional authority and consistent with section 446