

trust laws harm consumers by preventing the operation of the free-market, causing prices to rise, quality to suffer, and, as is certainly the case with the relationship between the HMOs and medical professionals, favoring certain industries over others.

By restoring the freedom of medical professionals to voluntarily come together to negotiate as a group with HMOs and insurance companies, this bill removes a government-imposed barrier to a true free market in health care. Of course, this bill does not infringe on the rights of health care professionals by forcing them to join a bargaining organization against their will. While Congress should protect the rights of all Americans to join organizations for the purpose of bargaining collectively, Congress also has a moral responsibility to ensure that no worker is forced by law to join or financially support such an organization.

Madam Speaker, it is my hope that Congress will not only remove the restraints on medical professionals' freedom of contract, but will also empower patients to control their health care by passing my Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act. The Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act puts individuals back in charge of their own health care by providing Americans with large tax credits and tax deductions for their health care expenses, including a deduction for premiums for a high-deductible insurance policy purchased in combination with a Health Savings Account. Putting individuals back in charge of their own health care decisions will enable patients to work with providers to ensure they receive the best possible health care at the lowest possible price. If providers and patients have the ability to form the contractual arrangements that they find most beneficial to them, the HMO monster will wither on the vine without the imposition of new federal regulations on the insurance industry.

In conclusion, I urge my colleagues to support the Quality Health Care Coalition Act and restore the freedom of contract and association to America's health care professionals. I also urge my colleagues to join me in working to promote a true free market in health care by putting patients back in charge of the health care dollar by supporting my Comprehensive Health Care Reform Act.

IN MEMORY OF MARGARET GRAY

**HON. IKE SKELTON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2009*

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, it is with deep regret that I inform the House of the death of Margaret Louise Gray of Lexington, MO.

Margaret was born October 27, 1931, in Ottawa, Kansas. She was married to William R. Gray, who preceded her in death on September 27, 1986. She is survived by a brother, Stephen Swaim, and two sisters, Doris Boyd and Betty Chatman.

Margaret was a member of the First Baptist Church of Lexington, the Lexington Business and Professional Woman's Club, War Dads, Elks, and a member of SORT. She was the Director of Family Services in Lafayette County for many years. Both her husband and she

were active in developing the Lexington Senior Center and subsequently the 4-Life Center. The senior center was later named the Margaret Gray Senior Center in honor of her hard work and financial support.

Madam Speaker, Margaret L. Gray was an influential member in the Lexington community. I know the members of the House will join me in extending their heartfelt condolences to her family and friends. She will be greatly missed.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS OF  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

SPEECH OF

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 2009*

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 194, a resolution to support the goals of International Women's Day. I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the work of my colleague, Rep. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, for introducing this resolution again in the 111th Congress, and for her invaluable work in support of women's rights as co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues.

In the United States and in countries around the world, women are agents of change, development, and prosperity, contributing in so many ways to the well-being of their families and communities. There is clear and abundant evidence that when women thrive, the entire world thrives as well.

However, the benefits of women's full participation in economic, political, and social life are not being realized in many parts of the world. In all regions, women are less likely than men to receive pay commensurate to the value of their work, be given a voice in their national governments, or have access to basic human rights such as the right to an education. In many countries, the United States included, domestic violence is further reducing the opportunities available to women and girls to lead happy, healthy lives. H. Res. 194 is an important step towards guaranteeing the basic rights of women and girls worldwide by calling for an end to this discrimination.

Throughout my time in Congress, promoting women's rights has been one of my top legislative priorities. For years I have worked tirelessly with likeminded colleagues to restore funding to UNFPA, an organization whose mission is to promote the right of every woman to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. I commend the new Administration for recognizing the value of this goal by committing to funding UNFPA, including \$50 million in the FY09 Omnibus Appropriations Bill.

However, more needs to be done in the 111th Congress to further women's rights. That is why I will be introducing a resolution condemning the actions of the Taliban to restrict girls' access to education in Swat, Pakistan, as well as H.R. 606, the International Women's Freedom Act. This bill reflects the goals of International Women's Day in many ways, as it calls for concerted action on the part of the State Department and Executive Branch to advance the rights of women, including creating an Office of International Women's Rights within the State Department, establishing a women's rights Internet site,

and requiring that Foreign Service Officers receive women's rights related training.

This resolution in support of International Women's Day recognizes the strength, leadership, and capability demonstrated by women in every village, city, and country. I ask my colleagues to join me in reaffirming their commitments to protecting the rights of women and girls around the world, by observing International Women's Day, and by honoring women's contributions every day.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MAJOR  
DRUG TRAFFICKING PROSECUTION  
ACT OF 2009

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 12, 2009*

Ms. WATERS. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Major Drug Trafficking Prosecution Act of 2009. This legislation will refocus federal prosecutorial resources on major drug traffickers and eliminate racial disparities created by the mandatory minimum sentences for powder and crack cocaine.

In the 1980s, Congress passed two Anti-Drug Abuse Acts with the goal that federal prosecutors would go after major drug traffickers at the top of the food chain, instead of low-level drug offenders at the bottom. Lengthy mandatory minimum prison sentences were passed for most drug crimes. These mandatory terms are triggered based solely on the type and weight of the drug involved, and, with very few exceptions, the courts cannot sentence below them.

Twenty years later, mandatory drug sentences have utterly failed to achieve Congress's goals.

First, these sentences are not stopping major drug traffickers. Huge quantities of drugs enter our country each year, but in 2005 the majority of crack and powder cocaine offenses, for example, were street-level dealers, mules and lookouts and users, 61.5 percent and 53.1 percent, respectively. Mandatory minimums lock up thousands of small-time sellers and addicts for decades.

Second, mandatory minimums have lengthened drug sentences, creating the need for more prisons and more taxpayer money to pay for them. Before the advent of mandatory sentences, drug offenders served an average of 22 months in prison; by 2004, that average sentence had nearly tripled, to 62 months in prison. Because of mandatory minimums, the federal prison budget has ballooned from \$220 million in 1986 to \$5.4 billion in 2008.

Longer sentences and more people in prison haven't translated into safer streets. At some point, the effectiveness per dollar in promoting increased public safety will decrease. For example, when crime dropped dramatically between 1992 and 1997, imprisonment was responsible for just 25 percent of that reduction. Seventy five percent was attributed to factors other than incarceration.

Finally, mandatory minimums have a disproportionate impact on African Americans, who comprise 12 percent of the U.S. population and 14 percent of drug users, but 30 percent of all federal drug convictions. African American drug defendants are 20 percent more likely to be sentenced to prison than