

questionnaire home health and DME providers from starting in the Medicare program.

THE SAFE MOTHERHOOD MONITORING AND PREVENTION RESEARCH ACT OF 1999

**HON. JO ANN EMERSON**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, let me tell you about my district. I represent 26 rural counties in Southern Missouri. These counties are home to some of the most poverty stricken communities in the State. Most of them lack even basic health care services. And many lack decent roads and reliable phone service. Many people in these communities find themselves isolated from their extended family, their friends and their neighbors.

When I was starting my family more than 20 years ago, I was lucky to have my mother, my sister and my mother-in-law to help me through my pregnancies. I was lucky to be able to afford health insurance that covered prenatal care. I was lucky to have access to quality health care in Cape Girardeau. But many American women aren't so fortunate. And they fall through the cracks of our health system.

Many young mothers-to-be in my rural district are isolated from family and friends—and they live miles away from nurses and doctors. This isolation often prevents them from getting prenatal care and adds to the fears and uncertainties that come along with being a new or expectant mother.

Fortunately for some of the young women in rural Missouri, there are people like Sister Rita and Sister Ann looking out for them. Ten years ago, Sister Rita—a parish nurse and midwife serving in Missouri's poor "Lead Belt" and Ozark counties—quickly realized that many of the young women there weren't prepared for healthy pregnancies and births or for caring for their infants. So Sister Rita began to network and build relationships in her community. She branched out and worked with the St. Louis University Medical Center and with State and federal health programs. And she established the "Whole Kids Outreach" in Ellington, Missouri.

Sister Ann is now carrying on the incredible work started by Sister Rita. The Whole Kids Outreach program has grown to include a Resource Mothers Program—a program that educates women about healthy pregnancies and childbirth, promotes access to care, and provides home care visits. The most amazing thing about this program is that it is staffed by experienced moms from the community who are trained as childbirth educators. And these local moms help establish circles of support for expectant and new moms.

It's with great admiration that I mention the Whole Kids Outreach program, because despite its modest size, it has been of tremendous help to many mothers and infants in rural Missouri. The young women in rural Missouri are not alone. Women throughout our nation face great challenges in securing healthy pregnancies and healthy children.

Consider the following: At the turn of this century more American women died in childbirth than from any other cause except for tuberculosis. At the close of this century, after all of the medical advances made in this country, it's easy to assume that today pregnancy and childbirth are safer for American women and their babies.

But this is a false assumption.

The recently released CDC report makes it painfully clear that the promise of safe motherhood is eluding too many women. In fact, during the past 15 years alone, total maternal deaths have not declined one bit in our nation. Just think of it. Today, tuberculosis claims about one American life out of 1,000 a year. But 2–3 women out of 10,000 lose their lives each day due to pregnancy-related conditions. And out of 1,000 live births in our country each year, 8 babies die. More infants die each year in the United States than in 24 other developed nations.

As a Member of Congress and as a mother of four daughters, this maternal and infant mortality rate is simply unacceptable. We've got to find out why safe motherhood is still out of reach for so many American women. I am very proud to join many of my esteemed colleagues—NITA LOWEY, SUE KELLEY, CYNTHIA MCKINNEY, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, and CAROLYN MALONEY—in introducing legislation today that will have a significant impact on the progress of maternal and infant health in this country.

In addition to introducing the Safe Motherhood Monitoring and Prevention Research Act, we would like to call on the Commerce Subcommittee on Health and Environment to hold oversight hearings on maternal and infant health and urge Congress as a whole to make this issue a national priority.

Our bill achieves 3 key goals, all necessary components to true progress in the enhancement of maternal and infant care.

First, it expands CDC's Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) so that all 50 states will benefit from a public health monitoring system of pregnancy-risk related factors. Although the PRAMS program has received a lot of recognition for positively affecting maternal and infant health outcomes, currently only 18 states are benefiting from the success of PRAMS. Our bill also supports local and state efforts to collect data on mothers who experience serious complications during their pregnancy.

Second, our bill authorizes an increase in federal funding for preventive research, so we can identify basic health prevention activities to improve maternal health. This aspect of the bill builds upon the Birth Defects Prevention Act, which my colleague, Senator KIT BOND and I sponsored in the 105th Congress and which was signed into law last April.

The third and final component of our bill directs CDC to help states and localities create public education and prevention programs to prevent poor maternal outcomes for American women.

In addition, our bill emphasizes the need to expand existing prevention programs and pregnancy risk assessment systems to include those areas of the country where underserved and at-risk populations reside.

By looking at the list of original cosponsors of this bill, one is amazed at the very diverse

groups of women legislators committed to this important piece of legislation. We're conservative and liberal. We're rural and urban. We're pro-life and pro-choice. And we're from multi-cultural backgrounds. But as a unique coalition of women, we're able to put aside our differences and come together on this common ground—on this precious ground—of the health and well-being of all mothers and infants in our nation. I urge all my colleagues to review the merits of the Safe Motherhood Monitoring and Prevention Research Act of 1999 and cosponsor this important piece of legislation.

REAUTHORIZE THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

**HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, recently in my home state of Illinois, the State Senate and the State House of Representatives adopted Senate Joint Resolution 39 urging the U.S. Congress to reauthorize the Older Americans Act for the upcoming fiscal year. I would like to commend the Illinois Legislature for their dedication to the elderly in their state and urge the 106th Congress to support the elderly of the country by reauthorizing the Older Americans Act. I enter into the RECORD Senate Joint Resolution No. 39.

Whereas, The Older Americans Act promotes the dignity and value of every older person age 60 and over (numbering 2,000,000 in Illinois) through an Aging Network led by the Illinois Department of Aging, 13 area agencies on aging, 233 community-based senior service agencies and 63 nutrition services agencies throughout Illinois; and

Whereas, The Older Americans Act is a successful federal program, with the U.S. Administration on Aging offering leadership in Washington D.C., the Illinois Department on Aging (the first state department on aging in the nation) at the State level, the area agencies on aging in 13 regions designated by the State covering all of Illinois, and community-based senior service agencies providing services in every community; and

Whereas, The Older Americans Act programs target resources and services to those in greatest economic and social need, promote the dignity and contributions of our senior citizens, support transportation services, provide home care, assist families and individuals with case management, guide those challenged by the legal system through legal assistance, provide for senior community service employment, offer information and assistance, establish multi-purpose senior centers as focal points on aging, serve congregate luncheon and home-delivered meals, provide health promotion and disease prevention activities, involve older persons in nutrition education, reach out to families with respite services for caregivers and small repair and home modifications, provide opportunities, education and services, connect people in shared housing, and advocate to public and private policy makers on the issues of importance to older persons; and

Whereas, The success of this aging network over the past 31 years is marked by the delivery of significant service to older persons in

their own homes and community with the following services examples of that success:

(1) 374,538 recipients of access services, including 235,148 Information and Assistance Services clients and 68,493 recipients of Case Management Services;

(2) 53,450 recipients of in-home services, including 6,460,533 home-delivered meals to 41,305 elders;

(3) 185,520 recipients of community services, including 3,636,855 meals to 79,012 congregate meal participants at 647 nutrition sites and services delivered from 170 Senior Centers;

(4) 760 recipients of employment services, including 760 senior community service employment program participants; and

(5) 98,600 recipients of nursing home ombudsman services; and

Whereas, The organizations serving older persons employ professionals dedicated to offering the highest level of service and caring workers who every day provide in-home care, rides, educational and social activities, shopping assistance, advice, and hope to those in greatest isolation and need; and

Whereas, The organizations serving older persons involve a multi-generational corps of volunteers who contribute the governance, planning, and delivery of services to older persons in their own communities through participation on boards and advisory councils and in the provision of clerical support, programming, and direct delivery of service to seniors; and

Whereas, The Older Americans Act programs in Illinois leverage local funding for aging services and encourage contributions from older persons; and

Whereas, The Older Americans Act programs are the foundation for the Illinois Community Care Program which reaches out to those with the lowest incomes and the greatest frailty to provide alternatives to long-term care, and the Illinois Elder Abuse and Neglect Interventions Program which assists families in the most difficult of domestic situations with investigation and practical interventions; and

Whereas, The Congress of the United States has not reauthorized the Older Americans Act since 1985 and only extends the program each year through level appropriations; and

Whereas, Expansion of the Older Americans Act is proposed in reauthorization legislation this year to offer family caregiver support, increased numbers of home-delivered meals, improved promotion of elder rights, consolidation of several programs and subtitles of the law; therefore be it

*Resolved, by the Senate of the Ninety-First General Assembly of the State of Illinois, the House of Representatives concurring herein, That we urge the Congress of the United States of America to reauthorize the Older Americans Act this year; and be it further*

*Resolved, That suitable copies of this resolution be delivered to the President pro tempore of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, and each member of the Illinois congressional delegation.*

Adopted by the Senate, May 26, 1999.

Concurred in by the House of Representatives, May 27, 1999.

### HONORING JOHN MEISE

#### HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, each year the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States and its Ladies Auxiliary sponsor the Voice of Democracy audio-essay scholarship competition. The program is now in its 52nd year and requires high school student entrants to write and record a three-to-five minute essay on an announced patriotic theme. This year's theme is "My Service to America", and over 80,000 students participate in the program nationwide.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that John Meise, a senior at Mount St. Joseph High School in Maryland's 7th Congressional District, has been named a National winner in the 1999 Voice of Democracy Program and recipient of the \$1,000 Ervin and Lorraine Rothenbuhler Scholarship Award. He plans a career in medicine. John was sponsored by VFW Post 6484 in Woodlawn Maryland.

Following is Mr. Meise's submission.

Ever since July 4, 1776, the citizens of the United States of America has served their country in a myriad of ways. Such service, is what preserves the ideals for which we stand in the United States: "life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." These three are the most elemental principles on which our great country rests. Through service to America and our fellow citizens, we can guard those ideals from which our forefathers set forth in the declaration of independence.

The right, that we treasure most, is life. Human life is to be held in the highest regard because we believe that everyone is equal. Color, religion, and social standing do not provide a basis on which a person is to be judged. Since we are all citizens of the United States we are equal. Community service can help us to realize this fully.

During my sophomore and junior years of high school, I volunteered at the University of Maryland Hospital's Shock Trauma Center. I completed approximately two hundred hours of service there and I enjoyed every minute of it. Through the hospital I was able to help people that were in terrible predicaments. I offered by services to people on all rungs of the social ladder and through that I made an important personal discovery. I observed that social class did not pre-determine a person's disposition. Some the the poorest patients I met were probably the most kind-hearted. Whether I was running a patient's blood to the lab for tests or feeding a paraplegic man his dinner, I knew I was helping someone important. I also knew that I was offering such service without expecting anything in return. I believe the satisfaction I received in my efforts at the hospital illustrates what the American character is all about. Through cooperation and helping others we actually provide a service to America itself in what we promote the basis morals and values which our society cannot progress.

As Americans, we hold liberty to be one of the most important aspects of our lives. We have the freedom to choose what we want to do. We may take this liberty for granted, but many people live in countries where they are not granted the freedoms that we use everyday. I feel that this freedom must be pro-

tected if we are to continue to live our lives the way we have always lived them.

Our armed forces are one of the instruments, which serve to protect this most precious liberty. I believe the best way for me to serve my country and protect such an ideal is by serving in the armed forces. Presently, I am applying to both the Naval Academy at Annapolis and the Military Academy at West Point in the hope that I may be granted an appointment to one of these institutions, so I might be allowed the opportunity to serve my country this way. I have aspired to serve in the military my entire life and I have been inspired by the many people who have served and by the many who have sacrificed their lives in their country's service.

A few years ago, I was an instructor at a Red Cross program for kids who did not know how to swim. We taught them the rudiments of water activity. I got a thrill seeing children, who had been previously afraid of the water, now able to swim and play in the water and enjoy it. This reminds me that the "pursuit of happiness" in this situation would be quite impossible without the help of the volunteers.

We willingly committed ourselves to helping the children pursue happiness. Once again, this shows how service is one of the underlying factors in the American character.

While many different people give service in many different ways, these citizens ultimately provide a solid core around on which our country can rest. Everyone's individual service to others eventually unfolds to a single service to America: its preservation. Through volunteering our time, we maintain the very ideals for which the thirteen original colonies broke away from England. In service we continue and protect our freedom, our life, and our pursuit of happiness."

### IN HONOR OF OUR NATION'S VETERANS

#### HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 23, 1999

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, in recognition of Memorial Day, on May 29, 1999, I had the honor of delivering the keynote address at the rededication and 50th anniversary celebration of the Lilly-Washington War Memorial in Lilly, Pennsylvania, a town of fewer than 2,000 people.

As part of the ceremony, we made special recognition of two individuals who made sacrifices in their own right in serving our country.

With my assistance, James A. Lego, Jr., of Gallitzin, Pennsylvania, was presented with the following medals that he had been awarded as a member of the 1st Infantry Division, 16th Regiment, but never received:

The Silver Star, on July 20, 1944.

The Bronze Star for Meritorious Service.

Two Purple Hearts for wounds received April 16, 1943 and July 14, 1944.

The Distinguished Unit Badge and two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Good Conduct Medal, Pre-Pearl Harbor Medal, Combat Infantryman Badge, Five Overseas Bars and the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater Service Medal with one Silver Star and one Bronze Service Star.

We also unveiled a monument in recognition of the late Mrs. Esther McCabe, a native of