

the years. And that's integrity. A lot of people in this town aspire to be called people of integrity. But along the way there may be a slip here, or a fudge there, and pretty soon, they're compromised and just don't measure up. There's never been a minute in Billy's career when he didn't measure up.

When we walk out the door of whatever business we're in for the last time, all we take with us is our name. Billy Higgins today takes with him his good name—followed by well done, good and faithful servant.

He is truly one of the good guys. He's also one of the most dedicated family men around this town, and it's so good to see his family here this evening. I know how important family is to Billy. I even ran into him a few summers ago on the Outer Banks where he and Nancy and all the kids and grandkids have a tradition of spending vacation time together each year.

And I also know how important faith is to Billy. I have a quotation on my office wall from Dr. James Dobson, which I'd like to share with you because I believe it could very well describe Billy:

"I have concluded that the accumulation of wealth, even if I could achieve it, is an insufficient reason for living. When I reach the end of my days, a moment or two from now, I must look backward on something more meaningful than the pursuit of houses and land and machines and stocks and bonds. Nor is fame of any lasting benefit. I will consider my earthly existence to have been wasted unless I can recall a loving family, a consistent investment in the lives of people, and an earnest attempt to serve the God who made me. Nothing else makes much sense."

That's Billy's legacy.

Billy, I am grateful that our paths in life crossed and have run together for so many years, and I am proud to call you my friend. God bless you.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROBERT E. ANDREWS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, on roll call numbers 167–169, I was unable to cast my vote. Had I been present, I would have voted Aye on each of them. At the time of the votes, I was proudly attending a ceremony in honor of my wife, Camille Spinello Andrews.

In addition to her tireless dedication as the mother of our two children, Jacquelyn and Josie, Camille serves as the Associate Dean of Enrollment and Projects for Rutgers University School of Law-Camden Campus. Her work in this capacity is well-regarded both by her colleagues and throughout the New Jersey legal community.

On June 7, her excellent work was publicly recognized in a ceremony in which she was awarded the Alfred C. Clapp Distinguished Service Award. Presented by the New Jersey Institute for Continuing Legal Education, this award is an expression of appreciation to legal professionals whose voluntary service has significantly contributed to the field of continuing legal education.

At this ceremony, I was proud to honor Camille with a Congressional Commendation. Proclaiming June 7, 1999 to be Camille Spinello Andrews Day throughout the First Congressional District of New Jersey, this commendation is a small token of the great respect I have for Camille's work. Her service to our community deserves the thanks and gratitude of us all. I am fortunate to love and receive the love of such a special woman.

Balancing the dual responsibilities of public service and family life is always a challenging task. I thank my constituents for their understanding and appreciate the strong support they have given to me and my family.

HONORING CARMEN DIAZ FOR HER LIFETIME DEDICATION TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring Ms. Carmen Diaz for her years of leadership and contribution to the communities of the 12th Congressional District.

In 1953 Ms. Diaz came to the United States to fulfill her dream of creating a better life for herself and her family. She began by working hard for \$42 a week as a machine operator in a woman's garment factory. She saved money, and was diligent and with great determination, in 1955 she was able to send for her children in Puerto Rico. With herself and two children to feed she continued to toil. She ensured the children were healthy and that they received an education.

She also took time to further her own education, making the effort to become a bilingual teacher. Once she received her degree, she began teaching bilingual education which she did for eight years.

During this time she became active in the community, working for Community Board 1. She was able to use her experience, education and determination to help other people in the community. Wanting to do more, striving to succeed, she enrolled in Boricua College in Brooklyn. With the same kind of dedication and effort that made her a success, she was able to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Sociology. With that accomplishment, she engaged in increased community work as a social worker.

From that point on, she remained deeply committed to civil service, working hard to help people throughout Brooklyn. She played a key role in many organizations including the Los Sures Senior Center and later in the Diana Jones Senior Center.

She did this kind of work until last year when she became ill and was unable to continue working. Despite the fact that she can no longer work, she still has an impact on our community. The work she does still helps people, but more importantly, she stands as a role model to thousands of people. She truly embodies the American Dream. She is a great woman and a great American, and I urge my colleagues to join me in honoring her.

A TRIBUTE TO HONOR OF THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF TECUMSEH

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, on June 25, 1999 the city of Tecumseh will celebrate its 175th anniversary. Tecumseh has a long and rich history dating back to 1824, when Musgrove Evans, Joseph Brown and Austin Wing founded the town making Tecumseh one of the first three settlements in the Michigan Territory along with Detroit and Monroe.

Tecumseh shares its unique name with the Shawnee Chief Tecumseh, who used the site as a meeting place for local Indian tribes and war councils in his effort to form a unified Indian nation.

The residents of Tecumseh have always been civic-minded and concerned with the conditions of their fellow man. Prior to the Civil War Tecumseh, along with several other communities in Lenawee County, was a common transit point for slaves seeking freedom along with the Underground Railroad.

While maintaining its distinctive small town atmosphere and agricultural roots, Tecumseh has been home to a multi-national Fortune 500 company, Tecumseh Products Inc., since 1934.

It is a testament to the perseverance and faith of her residents that Tecumseh has prospered for so long. I am proud of the city of Tecumseh and what its residents have accomplished over the last 175 years and I wish them another successful 175 years. I am proud to represent Tecumseh and offer them my heartfelt congratulations on this truly remarkable milestone.

VICRYL SUTURES

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, on May 20 of this year I commented on the 1994 recall of Vicryl sutures produced by the Ethicon Corporation. In my comments, I noted that according to FDA records, only 2% of the sutures were recovered in the recall. The numbers given to me by the FDA were incorrect. In fact, approximately 25% of the sutures were recovered in the recall. I include a letter from Melinda K. Plaisier, Interim Associated Commissioner for Legislative Affairs, describing the cause of the error and the correct facts.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,

Rockville, MD, May 28, 1999.

Hon. PETE STARK,

House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. STARK: In the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) May 18, 1999 letter of response to your April 19, 1999 letter regarding the distribution and recall of Vicryl sutures manufactured by Ethicon, Inc., there was a mistake. This letter is intended to correct that mistake. A response has also been

sent to your cosigner, Representative Henry A. Waxman.

When Ethicon originally provided distribution information to FDA, the manner in which the figures were reported was misunderstood by FDA. The number of sutures understood by FDA to have been distributed was considerably larger than the actual quantity. The 2% recovery rate therefore was inaccurate. The correct recovery figure was approximately 25%. This is based on distribution of 293,452 dozens and recovery of 72,929 dozens of sutures. If you have any questions regarding this information, we would be happy to discuss it with you further.

We trust this responds to your concerns. If we may be of further assistance, please let us know.

Sincerely,

MELINDA K. PLAISIER,
Interim Associate Commissioner
for Legislative Affairs.

IN HONOR OF DANIEL JOSLYN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the winner of the Plain Dealer Cuyahoga County Spelling Bee, Mr. Daniel Joslyn.

Daniel Joslyn is an extraordinary student at North Olmsted Middle School. He is very dedicated to his school work and it shows through this accomplishment. Daniel is the first North Olmsted Middle School student to win this competition in its twenty year history.

The National Spelling Bee is a wonderful program that motivates students to focus on the fundamentals of their education. It is a remarkable achievement for this young man to receive such an honor and to represent his school at the national level.

I would ask my fellow colleagues to join me in honoring young Daniel for his accomplishment and wishing him luck in his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEATH
TAX INFLATION ADJUSTMENT ACT

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to announce the introduction of The Death Tax Inflation Adjustment Act, legislation which would provide an annual cost-of-living adjustment for the unified credit—a major estate tax reduction tool—beginning in 2007.

Despite a tax system that discourages savings, many American families work hard to set aside a portion of their earnings because they hope to be able to leave something to their children. Not only are these lifelong savings subject to the death tax, however, but the value of the unified credit—a major death tax reduction tool—had, until recently, been seriously eroded by inflation.

As a result of the historic "Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997," the unified credit will now be

gradually increased from an affective exemption of \$600,000 in 1998 to an effective exemption of \$1,000,000 in 2006. Regrettably, while both the House- and Senate-passed versions of that landmark tax reduction package indexed this \$1,000,000 exemption annually for inflation, this provision was dropped from the final conference report and was not enacted into law.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation I am introducing today would simply provide for an annual cost-of-living adjustment to the unified credit beginning in 2007. While many of us in Congress would like to eliminate the death tax entirely, I hope we can all at least agree that the value of this important benefit should never again be eaten away by inflation. The time to act is now. I would urge all of my colleagues to co-sponsor The Death Tax Inflation Adjustment Act.

TRIBUTE TO JOEL SKLAR

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Joel Sklar, an outstanding individual who has dedicated his life to public service and education. He will be honored on Thursday, June 24, during the graduation ceremony at Lehman High School in my South Bronx Congressional district for his outstanding contributions to the community. Mr. Sklar, Principal of the Lola Rodriguez de Tio Academy of Future Technologies at Intermediate School 162 will be leaving his current position at the end of this month. He has devoted his entire career of 28 years to bettering the lives of the students in district 7.

A graduate of Yeshiva University and the City University of New York, Mr. Sklar began his teaching career in 1970 at P.S. 5 where he was a 6th grade teacher. A year later he moved to the Middle School level and became a science teacher at I.S. 162. While teaching science at I.S. 183, Mr. Sklar demonstrated the active engagement of students as they pursued the challenges of the world of science. After becoming a grade leader at I.S. 183 Mr. Sklar was soon recruited to the District 7 Office where he worked in the Curriculum & Instruction Unit. This led to his becoming the assistant to the Deputy Superintendent in the Office of Funded Programs.

Mr. Speaker, Joel Sklar's leadership abilities were fine-tuned during his tenure at the District 7 Office. He soon found his way to I.S. 151, where he helped redefine the instructional program before being appointed principal of I.S. 162 on August 7, 1987. During his twelve years at the helm of the school, he brought the students to the new age of technology. A New York State Magnet School in 1995 led the way to the birth of the Lola Rodriguez de Tio Academy of Future Technologies at I.S. 162. A model middle school for New York City and New York State, it has been the number one choice of middle schools for more than half of all the students graduating from District 7 elementary schools over the past 4 years. The Academy is cur-

rently the top middle school in District 7 in both reading and mathematics achievements. Its technology program is one that is being replicated in schools throughout the City of New York, as well as in New Jersey.

Mr. Sklar leaves us with many lessons learned in leadership, education and wisdom. A talented leader and educator, Mr. Sklar will continue sharing his knowledge and views with Yeshiva University High School for Boys, his alma mater.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing continued success to Mr. Joel Sklar and in recognizing him for his outstanding achievements in education and his enduring commitment to the community.

CONGRATULATING TRINIDAD
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS
BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Trinidad Catholic High School Girls basketball team on their Class A District 6 Championship. The Trinidad Catholic players, led by Coach Mike Vecellio, made their families and community proud in their achievement.

All teams, no matter what the sport, continually strive to find that special and unique combination of teamwork, leadership, skill and effort which unlocks the door to success. Under careful tutelage, hard-working teams not only win games, but also build the confidence necessary to win championships. Clearly, these dedicated hoopsters have found this winning formula and attained the next rung of sporting success.

May the Trinidad Catholic High School girls team rise to next year's challenge and find themselves the winner of the Colorado Class A State Championship. No matter what the outcome of next season, this team has proven it has the heart of a champion, and can take pride in the District 6 Championship.

CHILDREN'S CONGRESS

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 24, 1999

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the children who are here in our Nation's Capital this week for the first Children's Congress. Children from all 50 States are meeting with Members of Congress to discuss funding for research to find a cure for juvenile diabetes.

The Children's Congress was organized by the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation International. JDF was founded in 1970 by parents of children with diabetes. The mission of JDF is to find a cure for this disease through research within their children's lifetime. I can't think of a better way to understand the daily frustrations experienced by children with diabetes than to listen to their concerns. These