

clothing in public by anyone except clerics, and requires all religious groups and congregations to register or re-register." Also approved last May was a second law establishing the penalties if one were convicted of violating any of the statutes on religious activities. The penalties can range anywhere from lengthy prison sentences, massive fines, and confiscation of property, to denial of official registration rights. On May 12 of this year, Uzbekistan tightened its Criminal Code, making participation in an unregistered religious group a criminal offense, punishable by a fine equivalent to fifty times the minimum monthly wage or imprisonment of up to three years.

Mr. Speaker, these actions indicate that the policies of the Government of Uzbekistan toward religious groups are not moving in the right direction.

In fact, these initiatives are in direct violation to Uzbekistan's OSCE commitments, including Article 16.3 of the Vienna Concluding Document which states that "the State will grant upon their request to communities of believers, practicing or prepared to practice their faith within the constitutional framework of their States, recognition of the status provided for them in the respective countries." In the Copenhagen Concluding Document of 1990 Article 9.1, Uzbekistan has committed to "reaffirm that everyone will have the right to freedom of expression including the right to communication. This right will include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority and regardless of frontiers." Uzbekistan's current course of strangling all forms of religious discourse is a flagrant, deliberate, and unrelenting violation of these principles.

Last year Congress overwhelmingly passed the Religious Freedom Act of 1998 which reaffirmed the United States' commitment to supporting religious freedom abroad through U.S. foreign policy. Considering the litany of violations affecting religious liberty and the ongoing persecution of believers, it is time for Congress to consider our aid programs to Uzbekistan, including our military cooperation programs which cost about 33 million dollars in this year alone. Congress should also reconsider our trade relationship with Uzbekistan and scrutinize other programs such as Cooperative Threat Reduction where we can leverage our influence to help protect religious liberty and human rights.

TRIBUTE TO MAYOR EDWARD
QUAGLIA

HON. DAVID D. PHELPS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mayor Edward Quaglia of Herrin, Illinois. Mayor Quaglia served the people and city of Herrin faithfully for more than twenty years; seven of those years as an alderman on the City Council, and for 15 years as mayor. This year, on May 31, Mayor Quaglia retired as Mayor due to health concerns. In honor of his retirement, the City of Herrin, the

City Council of Herrin, and Mayor Victor Ritter have proclaimed July 18, 1999 as "Mayor Edward Quaglia Day."

Mr. Speaker, Mayor Quaglia will be long remembered by the good people of the City of Herrin, southern Illinois, and the entire State for his determined dedication to making Herrin a better place to live and to raise a family. Mayor Quaglia will not only be remembered for his numerous achievements including improving the city's infrastructure, and his hard work on development and construction of the Civic Center, the Annual Mayor's Community Wide Thanksgiving Dinner for the poor and homeless, the High School Sport's Complex, and planning the city's premier annual event Herrifesta Italiana, but most importantly for his compassionate and straight-forward leadership style. He always gave all he had for a good cause and put the welfare of the citizens and City of Herrin first. When speaking of Mayor Quaglia, it is impossible not to mention his family, which is so important to him. His wife JoAnne has always stood by his side and been the light of his life. He has five loving children and four beautiful grandchildren.

I know that Mayor Quaglia will be sorely missed by all of Herrin in his retirement. But it is a retirement well earned, and one that I am sure that Edward Quaglia, and his family and friends, will enjoy with him to the fullest. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my fellow Members to share in my wish to extend Mayor Quaglia a long, healthy, and happy retirement along with Godspeed.

TRIBUTE TO BOB TOBIAS

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to rise in tribute to Bob Tobias, who is retiring after 31 years with the National Treasury Employees Union—including sixteen years as its president. He has been a tireless and effective advocate for the workers he represents, and he is a well-regarded spokesperson for the interests of all federal employees.

I got to know Bob in 1996 when we were both appointed to the National Commission on Restructuring the IRS, which I co-chaired with Senator BOB KERREY. He was an active and productive member of the Restructuring Commission, and helped to develop a number of the Commission's recommendations that were later signed into law as part of the IRS Restructuring and Reform Act.

I admire Bob for speaking up on IRS reform at a time when I suspect many of his members were uneasy about the long-term ramifications of the restructuring effort. He deserves a great deal of credit for helping to shape a bill that will not only benefit American taxpayers, but will also create a greatly improved work environment for IRS employees.

I understand that Bob plans to teach and write on public policy issues after leaving the NTEU. But he will also be continuing to work on IRS reform—I understand that he will be nominated by the President to serve on the IRS Oversight Board.

Bob played an important role in creating the framework for a new IRS for the 21st Century. I look forward to continuing to work with him in his role on the IRS Oversight Board, and I wish him the best of luck in all his future endeavors.

INTRODUCING THE LAND
RECYCLING ACT OF 1999

HON. JAMES C. GREENWOOD

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Land Recycling Act of 1999 along with a strong bipartisan group of co-sponsors. The Act will remove Federal barriers to the cleanup of brownfields across the country. Removing these barriers will spur investors, benefit cleanup contractors and provide tools for state and local governments to tackle this longstanding problem. These efforts will provide for more livable, secure and vibrant neighborhoods. The blight that has dominated both urban and rural areas should not continue.

My bill will bring about aggressive state reclamation and cleanup of brownfields—abandoned or underutilized former industrial properties where actual or potential environmental contamination hinders redevelopment or prevents it altogether. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] estimates that there may be as many as 500,000 such sites nationwide. In my own congressional district, the southern portion of Bucks County is estimated to have 3 square miles of abandoned or underutilized industrial property.

These well-positioned, once-productive industrial real estate sites pose continuing risks to human health and the environment, erode state and local tax bases, hinder job growth, and allow existing infrastructure to go to waste. Moreover, the reluctance to utilize brownfields has led developers to bulldoze greenfields, which do not pose the risk of liability. Development in these areas contributes to suburban sprawl, and eliminates future recreational and agricultural uses. The Land Recycling Act will help stop urban erosion, and provide incentives to the redevelopment of our cities and towns across the country.

The brownfields problem has many causes. Foremost among them is the existing Federal law itself. Under the Superfund law, parties who currently own or operate a facility can be held 100 percent liable for any cleanup costs regardless of whether they contributed to the environmental contamination and regardless of whether they were in any way at fault. Because of the potential for this kind of liability, it is simply not worth dealing with the environmental exposure as long as developers have the alternative of building in rural areas where they are not exposed to liability. Owners can't sell and instead simply mothball them indefinitely. Clean-up contractors face uncertain liability.

Unrealistic standards and one-size-fits-all remedy selection also prevent voluntary actions and leave sites in years of red tape. The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act

[RCRA] poses nearly identical concerns. Under section 7003 of that law, for instance, EPA has broad authority to order a current owner-operator to address environmental contamination, again, regardless of fault.

Thirty-two states have launched so-called voluntary cleanup programs. We must help these programs thrive. Under these initiatives property owners comply with state cleanup plans and are then released from further environmental liability at the site. The subcommittee has received testimony in the past from a variety of states and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency [EPA], demonstrating that these state voluntary cleanup programs have been responsible for the redevelopment of hundreds of brownfields. In the first year the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania enacted its brownfields program, it succeeded in cleaning 35 sites.

Although many of these state laws have proven successful, states, businesses, and other experts have testified that the possibility of continuing Federal liability despite an agreement to limit State liability—the so-called dual master problem—seriously diminishes the effectiveness of State voluntary cleanup programs. Because redevelopers face the potential for cleanup obligations above and beyond what a State has decided is appropriate to protect health and the environment, they may hesitate to enter into agreements with sellers to purchase idle properties. The testimony establishes, in my mind, that if brownfields redevelopers could be confident that the cleanup agreements entered into with States would not be second-guessed by EPA, then they would be far more likely to agree to conduct a cleanup.

The Land Recycling Act of 1999 is based on the input of all of the stakeholders in the brownfields debate—the federal government, states, local governments, clean-up contractors, sellers, buyers, developers, lenders, environmentalists, community interests, and others—and in particular based on my own experiences in my district. Among other things, the bill provides “finality” for brownfields cleanups done pursuant to, and in compliance with, State programs, releasing buyers and sellers from liability and litigation under federal law. This certainly is number one on the wish list for developers and Rust Belt businesses. It will also provide liability protection under federal law for a number of nonpolluters, including: innocent landowners, prospective purchasers, contiguous property owners, and response action contractors—thus removing disincentives to cleanup and reuse. This legislation will streamline the federal cleanup process and employ sound and objective science. Finally, the Land Recycling Act of 1999 will provide brownfield grants to states, local governments, and Indian tribes for the inventory and assessment of brownfield sites and the capitalization of revolving loan funds for cleanups.

I believe these straightforward solutions will provide an aggressive antidote to the wasteful burden of brownfields in America and are part of the overall set of solutions we must pursue to reform the nation's broken hazardous waste laws. I reemphasize this is a bipartisan effort. Reform efforts that are strictly Democrat or strictly Republican mean the group has a point

to make but is not serious about enacting legislation in the 106th Congress.

While I am confident that the Land Recycling Act will go a very long way, we in Congress also have a larger task at hand—overhaul of the Superfund Program to ensure that we do not perpetuate the brownfields problem across the country. The Congress needs to address fairness and liability issues for small business recyclers and others. The Land Recycling Act of 1999 is only a piece of the puzzle. I look to the chairman of the Commerce Committee, Mr. BLILEY, and the chairman of the Finance and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee, Mr. OXLEY, for continued leadership on Superfund reform to address the areas that we can and must address. These two chairmen have fought for Superfund reform and continue their interest in real solutions. The bill last Congress, H.R. 3000, The Superfund Reform Act, had 19 Democrat cosponsors and represented a strong bipartisan effort. I hope that 1999 offers more promise, and that they will again consider including the Land Recycling Act as part of their Superfund reform effort.

A TRIBUTE TO BRIG. GEN. PAUL R. COOPER

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Brigadier General Paul R. Cooper, the commander of the Air Force Reserve Command's 440th Airlift Wing, since August 1995. General Cooper is leaving this post and on August 1 will assume his new duties as the Commander of the 445 Airlift Wing, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio. Milwaukee's loss is surely Ohio's gain.

A native of Seattle, Washington, General Cooper graduated in 1967 from the University of Washington with a degree in chemistry and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. He has been a wing commander, group commander and installation commander at two Air Force Reserve bases. General Cooper was recalled to active duty during Operation Desert Storm, where he served as commander of a composite C-130 unit deployed to the Middle East for six months. He was selected to return to extended active duty from June to October 1996 to command the 4100th Group and serve as the installation commander of the NATO Air Base, Bosnia-Herzegovina, as part of the implementation force under Operation Joint Endeavor. General Cooper is a command pilot with over 11,500 flight hours.

General Cooper and his wife Kathy will be honored at a farewell dinner and reception July 30 in Milwaukee at which time the Coopers' many friends and colleagues will have an opportunity to show their appreciation for a job well done at the 440th.

I'd like to take this opportunity to publicly thank General Cooper for all his assistance over the last four years when I have called on him to aide the members of the unit as well as the Milwaukee community. In fact, just last

month General Cooper showed his commitment to our community by presiding over a military medals presentation in which I was proud to distribute well-deserved medals to World War II soldiers and their families.

Again, on behalf of the men and women of the 440th and the entire southeastern Wisconsin community, thank you General Cooper for a job well done. God bless you and best wishes at your new post.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to explain that I was unable to vote on Messrs. GILMAN and MARKEY, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. GIBBONS amendments to H.R. 2415, the American Embassy Security Act. I was needed at home in Missouri for family reasons. At the time of the votes, I was flying back to Washington and was unable to return in time.

If I had voted, I would have voted yes on Messrs. GILMAN and MARKEY's amendment to restrict all nuclear agreements and cooperation between the U.S. and Korea. I would have voted yes on Mr. SANDERS' amendment to prohibit State Department employees from imposing restrictions or interfering on Asian and African nations from importing prescription medications from the lowest-priced source available. And I would have voted yes on Mr. GIBBONS' amendment to require the Secretary of State to issue regulations authorizing that certain requirements be adhered to before a person younger than 14 years of age may be issued his or her first passport.

RESULTS OF AN EDUCATION FIELD HEARING

HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 21, 1999

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to report on the field hearing that the House Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Youth & Families held in my district—in Anaheim, California—on parent and community involvement in education this month.

Today's children bring so many needs to our classrooms. And we are all responsible for making sure those needs are met—parents, teachers and educators; federal, state and local government; the corporate and nonprofit sectors; our institutions of higher learning and law enforcement.

Teachers can't meet those needs alone. Parents can't do it alone. It's too late for our universities to do it once our kids get to college. And recent events all over our nation have proven that our young people certainly can't make it on their own.

Schools need adequate resources—especially those with the children and the families who need it the most—so our schools can focus on education instead of fundraising. That falls to all of us.