

proud co-sponsor of this important legislation, H.R. 664, the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act, which relies on market forces to lower the costs of prescription drugs for seniors. The bill would allow pharmacists to purchase drugs for senior citizens at the same price the federal government purchases prescription drugs through the Department of Veterans Affairs, Medicaid, or other programs. My constituents, especially the seniors on Guam know all too well the dilemma of acquiring needed medication without sacrificing the other essential necessities of life, strongly support this legislation and have called upon me to urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I want to particularly thank my colleague, Congressman TOM ALLEN, for his diligent work in bringing this issue to our attention, of his work in sponsoring this legislation and for his unwavering commitment to older Americans. Mr. Speaker, I sincerely hope that the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act receives its due consideration and reaches the floor for passage as soon as possible. Our senior citizens deserve no less than affordable medication and a Congress that cares.

DEVASTATING EARTHQUAKE HITS
TAIWAN

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, a devastating earthquake struck Taiwan earlier this week. The quake was centered 90 miles south of Taipei in Nantou county. Registering 7.6 on the Richter scale, the quake has claimed more than 1,800 lives and destroyed hundreds of homes. Thousands more are believed to be trapped in the rubble, and the death toll is expected to increase. Aftershocks continue to rumble through Taiwan.

The earthquake crippled Taiwan's infrastructure in the hardest hit areas. Phone, power and water lines were knocked out. Over 100,000 people were left homeless sleeping on blankets in makeshift shelter areas. Roads are barely usable as large gashes crisscross many of the main thoroughfares in central Taiwan making it extremely difficult for rescue workers to deliver aid.

I understand that a number of Americans may have family or friends in Taiwan. Many of them may be extremely worried due to the lack of information and the inability to contact them by phone. I call upon the U.S. Department of State and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office. Taiwan's de facto embassy in the U.S., to coordinate efforts to keep them informed of further developments and to provide all reasonable assistance in locating and determining the status of their family and friends.

The U.S. Agency for International Development, the lead U.S. agency for international humanitarian efforts, has activated a team of 100 search and rescue personnel and 106,000 pounds of equipment. They have also provided a general information number that can be reached at 1-800-USAID-RELIEF. I commend USAID for their swift and efficient re-

sponse to this humanitarian disaster, and I am certain that they will continue to work closely with Taiwan to coordinate relief efforts.

USAID has indicated the transportation of relief goods to Taiwan is very difficult and inefficient at this time, so monetary donations are preferred. To that end, the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office established the "Taiwan Earthquake Relief Fund" for individuals interested in providing support. Donations can be made to Riggs Bank, account number 17306006, 1913 Massachusetts Avenue, NW., Washington, DC, 20016.

The U.S. is not the sole nation involved in the search and rescue effort. The response from the international community has also been swift. Switzerland, Germany, Singapore, Japan and Russia have all sent personnel and equipment to Taiwan to assist with search and rescue efforts.

All the rescue teams are working non-stop to comb through the rubble in search of survivors. God bless them for their tireless and courageous efforts.

My thoughts and prayers are with them all in the aftermath of this tragic disaster.

U.S. CONGRESSIONAL LETTER
CALLS FOR RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN INDIA

HON. JOHN T. DOOLITTLE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, last month several of my colleagues and I sent a letter to Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee calling for the release of political prisoners in India. So far we have received no response.

According to Amnesty International, thousands of political prisoners are being held in illegal detention without charge or trial. Several Sikh political prisoners wrote a letter from the Nabha Security jail on the Sikh Nation's 300th anniversary in which they urged Sikhs to get involved in getting them released. Some of these Sikh political prisoners have been held since 1984. Fifteen years in illegal detention without charge or trials is the tactic of a police state, not of the democracy India claims to be.

Our letter reminds the Indian leader that if India is going to proclaim its democratic principles, it should release all political prisoners and bring the police who have committed atrocities against the Sikhs to justice. If it does not, we should be ready to take appropriate action to deprive India of the privileges that accrue to democratic and friendly countries.

If India continues to oppress its minorities and hold thousands of political prisoners without charge of trial, America should stop aid and trade to the repressive Indian regime. In addition, we should support self-determination for all the nations and peoples of South Asia. This is the way to ensure that all the people and nations of South Asia may live in freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to place the Congressional letter to Prime Minister Vajpayee into the RECORD.

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 30, 1999.

HON. ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE,
Prime Minister of India, Chanakyapuri, New
Delhi, India.

DEAR MR. PRIME MINISTER: We are very disturbed by a recent Amnesty International report that thousands of political prisoners are being held in Indian prisons without charge or trial. In a democracy, there should not be political prisoners.

In addition, a group of political prisoners held at Nabha Security Jail wrote to the Sikhs earlier this year asking for help in getting them released. There are thousands of Sikh political prisoners being held in India. Some Sikh political prisoners have been held since 1984 without charge or trial. How can a country that proclaims its support for democratic principles continue to hold political prisoners?

Human-rights activist Jaswant Singh Khralra wrote a report showing that tens of thousands of Sikhs were abducted, tortured, murdered, and declared "unidentified," then their bodies were cremated. After Mr. Khralra published this report, he was kidnapped by the police and they killed him six weeks later, according to a witness. The police responsible for this act have never been punished, despite a court order. Neither has Swaran Singh Ghotna, the police officer responsible for the torture and murder of Akal Takht Jathedar Gurdev Singh Kaunke, who was torn in half.

Mr. Khralra's findings were confirmed by a recently-issued report from the Committee for Coordination on Disappearances in Punjab, which issued an "interim report" that identifies at least 838 cases of arbitrary execution and secret cremation. These are not the acts of a democratic country.

As members of the United States Congress, we will be watching with interest the actions that you take. If these kinds of acts continue, we will be forced to consider cutting off American aid and trade to India. We expect a democratic state like India to live up to the principles of democracy and the rule of law.

Sincerely,
Edolphus Towns, Dan Burton, William Jefferson, Roscoe Bartlett, John T. Doolittle, Jack Metcalf, Sam Farr, George Radanovich, Eni Faleomavaega, Bobby L. Rush, James Traficant, Wally Herger, Gary Condit, Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Peter King, J.C. Watts, Donald Payne, Cynthia McKinney, Brian P. Bilbray, Major R. Owens, Bernard Sanders, Richard Pombo, Albert R. Wynn, Carlos Romero-Barceló, James Rogan, Duke Cunningham, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, David McIntosh, Collin C. Peterson.

THE INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION
ACT

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to join my colleagues from both sides of the aisle today in introducing the Intercountry Adoption Act. By providing for the implementation of the Hague Convention, this legislation will help unite American families with waiting children from around the world.

For years, American families have reached across cultural and national boundaries to embrace children through international adoption. In 1998 alone, almost 16,000 children were adopted by Americans from abroad. By signing the Hague Convention on the Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption, the United States and over 60 other nations recognized the importance of international adoption. The Hague Convention creates a structure to strengthen cooperation among nations in adoption and protects adoptive families from fraud and abuse.

Although the United States signed the Hague Convention in 1994, Congress has yet to ratify and implement the Convention. The Intercountry Adoption Act, by providing for the enactment of the Hague Convention, would strengthen the process that builds thousands of international adoptive families every year. Our legislation sends a strong signal that the United States is committed to providing permanent homes for its own children and for children all across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, the Hague Convention promotes cooperation among national governments, but its most significant impact is deeply personal. My own family was forever changed and enriched by the adoption of our two children from Korea. I am profoundly grateful to have Kathryn and Scott in my life. The legislation we introduce today will allow me to express my gratitude by aiding efforts to unite every waiting child in every nation with a "forever family."

SPANISH PEAKS WILDERNESS ACT
OF 1999

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 13, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to make additional remarks regarding the bill H.R. 898, the Spanish Peaks Wilderness Act of 1999, which I had the pleasure of introducing and sponsoring in Congress this year.

This legislation will give permanent protection, in the form of wilderness, to the heart of the beautiful Spanish Peaks area in Colorado. The bill is cosponsored by several of my colleagues from Colorado, including Mr. SCHAFER, whose district includes the portion of the Spanish Peaks within Las Animas County. I am also pleased to be joined by Mr. HEFLEY, Mr. TANCREDO, and Mr. MARK UDALL of Colorado. I greatly appreciate their assistance and support.

Also, across the Capitol, Senator ALLARD has introduced an identical companion bill. I would like to extend my appreciation to the Senator for his active support of this worthwhile legislation. I would also like to thank Chairman YOUNG and Subcommittee Chairwoman CHENOWETH for their work in the Committee on Resources to get this bill through committee quickly and onto the floor.

Finally, I would offer a note of appreciation and thanks to the former Members of Congress whose efforts made today's legislation

possible. First, approximately 20 years ago, Senator William Armstrong of Colorado began this worthwhile process by proposing wilderness in Colorado, and in 1986, Senator Armstrong proposed protected status and management for the Spanish Peaks. His efforts set in place the foundation upon which today's bill is built. Second, I would like to thank the former Congressman from the Second District of Colorado, Mr. Skaggs. Together, he and I introduced this legislation in the 105th Congress, which passed the House but due to time constraints did not pass the Senate. The efforts by both of these individual legislators helped make this bill possible.

The mountains known as the Spanish Peaks are two volcanic peaks in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties. The eastern peak rises to 12,683 feet above sea level, while the summit of the western peak reaches 13,626 feet. The two served as landmarks for native Americans as well as some of Colorado's other early settlers.

With this history, it's not surprising that the Spanish Peaks portion of the San Isabel National Forest was included in 1977 on the National Registry of Natural Landmarks. The Spanish Peaks area has outstanding scenic, geologic, and wilderness values, including a spectacular system of over 250 free-standing dikes and ramps of volcanic materials radiating from the peaks. The lands covered by this bill are not only beautiful and part of a rich heritage, but also provide an excellent source of recreation. The State of Colorado has designated the Spanish Peaks as a natural area, and they are a popular destination for hikers seeking an opportunity to enjoy an unmatched vista of southeastern Colorado's mountains and plains.

The Forest Service originally reviewed and recommended the Spanish Peaks area for possible wilderness designation in 1979. The process since then has involved several steps, and during that time, the Forest Service has been able to acquire most of the inholdings within Spanish Peaks area. So the way is now clear for Congress to finish the job and designate the Spanish Peaks area as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The bill before the House would designate as wilderness about 18,000 acres of the San Isabel National Forest, including both of the Spanish Peaks as well as the slopes below and between them. This includes most of the lands originally recommended for wilderness by the Forest Service, but with boundary revisions that will exclude some private lands. I would like to note that Senator ALLARD and I have made significant efforts to address local concerns about the wilderness designation, including: (1) adjusting the boundary slightly to exclude certain lands that are likely to have the capacity for mineral production; and (2) excluding from the wilderness a road used by locals for access to the beauty of the Spanish Peaks. Senator ALLARD and I did not act to introduce this bill until a local consensus was achieved on the wilderness designation.

The bill itself is very simple. It would just add the Spanish Peaks area to the list of areas designated as wilderness by the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993. As a result, all the provisions of that act—including the provisions related to water—would apply to the

Spanish Peaks area just as they do to the other areas on that list. Like all the areas now on that list, the Spanish Peaks area covered by this bill is a headwaters area, which for all practical purposes eliminates the possibility of water conflicts. There are no water diversions within the area.

Mr. Speaker, I close my statement by thanking all of my fellow members for your time and by urging all Members of the House to support of passage of H.R. 989.

STUDENT PRIVACY PROTECTION
ACT

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, as kids get settled in to school this year, I want to make sure that they and their parents are aware of a disturbing trend taking place on campuses across the country.

Companies are increasingly entering the classroom to acquire hard-to-get information about the purchasing preferences and personal habits of young people. They are doing this because kids aged 4 through 12 are the hottest market group being targeted by retailers and others.

The problem is, kids do not always know if they are divulging personal information, and parents may not know that their children are spending part of their school day teaching companies how best to target young people.

That is why I am introducing legislation today that will protect student privacy and parents' rights to information about their children's education.

The legislation would prohibit schools from letting students participate in various forms of market research at school without their parent's written permission. My bill also would require a broad study of commercial involvement in the classroom.

I am proud to have the support of Consumers Union and the National Parent Teacher Association in this effort. The PTA has been a leader in supporting efforts to improve educational quality and Consumers Union has been a champion of consumer privacy.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

Normally, we do not think of privacy and educational quality as issues that overlap. But the fact that both these groups are here today illustrates how market research in schools touches upon a range of issues that concern diverse groups.

As you know, there is a growing concern over privacy in this country, where Americans are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the benefits of new technology can also lead to a loss of control over personal, medical and financial information.

I hear about this concern all the time. I support efforts by my colleagues to restore the privacy protections most of us have taken for granted.

Another major concern that nearly everyone in California and the Nation is talking about is the quality of our young children's education.