

shippers. Now the Administration would impose more than 10 times that burden on "users." We don't know who the users are, since the bill doesn't even attempt to identify them.

We had some experience with such fees imposed on our small railroads several year ago by the Federal Railroad Administration. Our Committee found that these small companies—the ones that literally are the only way to keep rail service in small communities—were paying up to 17 percent of net income in so-called "user fees"—on top of their state and federal taxes. That's why we ended those FRA fees, and I see no reason to impose a similar burden on struggling small businesses through STB fees, as the Administration now proposes.

While I cannot endorse much of what the Administration has proposed in its STB bill, I remain hopeful that a compromise can be reached on the contentious issues that have prevented an STB reauthorization bill from being enacted.

HONORING JOHN PAKCHOIAN,
GROWER OF THE YEAR

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor John Pakchoian, as American Vineyard's Grower of the Year for 1999. Mr. Pakchoian began farming in 1938 in a vineyard near Fowler, California. He is 82 years old and still farming.

John Pakchoian's favorite thing to talk about is farming. He was born into a farming family where he learned the responsibilities of hard work at the young age of six, after his father died. Pakchoian was the oldest child and the only boy. He worked before school and after school to help support the family.

John Pakchoian enlisted in the Marine Corps when World War II broke out. As Private First Class, Pakchoian belonged to the 26th Regiment, 5th Marine Division. His heroic performance in Saesbo, Japan on July 21, 1944 earned him a Bronze Medal.

The raisin industry went through a tough time at the start of World War II, prices were deteriorating and growers were losing hope. Raisin growers were called upon to produce raisins for the troops overseas, which boosted prices. In 1937 under the Federal Marketing Order Act, a federal marketing order for raisins was formed in 1949.

It has been 50 years since the marketing order was formed, and the raisin industry has come a long way, facing many challenges along the way. These challenges prompted Pakchoian to get involved in industry issues. He along with Ernie Bedrosian and Dick Mitchell helped draft the by-laws of the Raisin Bargaining Association, RBA. John Pakchoian was the fifth chairman of RBA and served on the Fresno County Farm Bureau Raisin Committee for 10 years.

John and Clyde Nef were the driving force behind the Raisin Industry Diversion Program in the mid 80's, known as RID. Pakchoian said

the industry needed RID because too much raisin tonnage was being sold for cattle feed. In recent years there hasn't been a need for RID. The focus of the market now is to hold on to its markets and explore new ones.

Pakchoian has grown every crop you can grow in the San Joaquin Valley and the only ones that have carried him through were the table grapes, wine grapes and raisins. Raisins have been the one crop that has kept John in business all of these years. Pakchoian likes nothing more than farming.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize Mr. John Pakchoian as Grower of the Year, 1999. He has worked hard to promote the raisin industry and bring it to where it is today. I urge my colleagues to join me in wishing John Pakchoian many more years of continued success.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE FRANCIS
WHITAKER

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell you of a man who epitomizes the values and traditions that this country was built upon. Francis Whitaker was known nationally for his accomplishments as a blacksmith and locally for his contributions to the community. Though he is gone, he will live in the hearts of all who knew him and be remembered for many years by those who have heard his amazing story.

The life accomplishments of Francis Whitaker are many. He was named a National Heritage Fellow by the National Endowment of the Arts, the nation's highest traditional arts award. In 1995, he received the Governors Award for Excellence in the Arts as a Master Folk Artist. In 1989, Colorado Rocky Mountain School dedicated the Blacksmithing School with its six forges and library to Francis Whitaker. The former Governor of Colorado, Roy Romer, nominated him for the 1998 National Living Treasure Award, for which he was one three finalists. He has published three books on blacksmithing and has appeared on television several times.

Although his professional accomplishments will long be remembered and admired, most who knew him well will remember Francis Whitaker, above all else, as a friend. It is clear that the multitude of those who have come to know Francis as a friend will be worse off in his absence. However, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that, in spite of this profound loss, the students, family and friends of Francis Whitaker can take solace in the knowledge that each is a better person for having known him.

SUPPORTING GIFTED AND
TALENTED PROGRAMS

HON. DAVID M. McINTOSH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 3, 1999

Mr. McINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend my colleagues for voting to expand

gifted and talented programs. On October 21, we passed H.R. 2, the Student Results Act, which reauthorized the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act.

When I spoke before the Indiana Association for the Gifted last year I stated I was going to make gifted and talented programs one of my highest priorities. I want to thank my colleagues who voted for proposal and pledged their support for gifted and talented children.

The Javits program supports national research efforts and awards grants to school corporations, state departments of education, institutions of higher education, and other public and private agencies and organizations to help meet the needs of gifted and talented students in elementary and secondary schools.

Several of my colleagues and I on the Education Committee led the effort to expand this program and succeeded in adding a significant state component. During the drafting state of the Student Results Act, we included provisions from the Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, a bill we co-sponsored earlier this year. This important legislation provides grants to states to help them implement successful research findings and model projects funded by the Javits program over the past ten years.

Mr. Speaker, gifted and talented programs are a proven method of helping children to meet their potential, while preventing drop-outs and other risk behaviors. Gifted children greatly benefit from being exposed to challenging and enriched curricula taught by trained staff who understand their special needs.

In Indiana, we have some very talented educators working with gifted and talented children. Indiana is one of only a few states that has a two year public residential high school for high-ability students, the Indiana Academy for Science, Mathematics and Humanities located at Ball State University in Muncie Indiana. In addition, Indiana has summer and week-end programs for these students.

In several school districts such as Southwest Allen County located in Fort Wayne Indiana we are fortunate to have a comprehensive program for gifted students, beginning in kindergarten. This type of K-12 program is unique and provides a model for other school districts.

While there are many excellent programs in Indiana, not all schools offer programs or services to meet the educational needs of gifted and talented students. The Javits program will provide Hoosiers with additional funds to reach out to students who currently do not have access to gifted and talented programs.

I greatly appreciate those who have joined me in opening up opportunities for gifted children.