November 17, 1999

A 35-year employee of the National Weather Service, part of the Department of Commerce’s National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Mr. Augulis has always held public safety as the first priority in his career, whether as a forecaster or as an office and regional manager. He recently retired after 12 years as Director of the 14-state Central Region and is currently enjoying his retirement in Las Vegas, where he relocated to be near his family.

Mr. Augulis joined the National Weather Service in August 1961 as a Weather Bureau Student Trainee at WBAS Midway Airport in Chicago while attending St. Louis University. He earned his Bachelor of Science in Meteorology in 1963 and added a Masters Degree in 1967. His distinguished career included a variety of forecasting and management positions with the National Weather Service in Salt Lake City, Utah; to Anchorage and Fairbanks, Alaska; Garden City, New York; and, finally, to Kansas City.

As meteorologist in charge of the new Fairbanks Weather Forecast Office beginning in 1974, Mr. Augulis presided over a staff that originated service programs during the exciting and challenging times of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction.

Mr. Augulis’ leadership was invaluable to employees during the mid-1970s transition from teletype machines to computers as the Automation of Field Operations (AFOS) communications network was implemented by the National Weather Service.

Mr. Augulis’ last decade with the National Weather Service included the largest modernization and reorganization ever undertaken by the agency. He helped guide his Region through the introduction and implementation of state-of-the-art Doppler radar, computer-enhanced weather modeling and forecasting, and restructuring from more than 300 offices of varying sizes and capabilities to an efficient network of 123 Twenty-First Century Weather Forecast Offices across the United States.

It was his acquisition of a new communications system and the National Weather Service, the largest federal Internet service, which he implemented.

Mr. Augulis was a quiet and unassuming man, an able and dedicated public servant who served with distinction for over 35 years. He was respected by his peers, and his work ethic and professional character were an inspiration to all who worked with him.

Mr. Augulis has been a dedicated public servant who has served his country with honor and distinction. He has been a true American hero.

A TRIBUTE TO AN AMERICAN VETERAN—MR. JESSE CONTRERAS

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

President Clinton’s impassioned address stated that:

‘‘[T]he young men and women who have died in defense of our country gave up not only the life they were living, but also the life they would have lived—their chance to be parents; their chance to know their grandchildren. Too often when we speak of sacrifice, we speak in generalities about the larger sweep of history, and the sum total of our national experience. But it is very important to remember that every single veteran’s life we honor today was just that—a life—just like yours and mine. A life with family and friends, and love and hopes and dreams, and ups and downs; a life that should have been able to play its full course.’’

Taking the President’s words to heart and remembering our fallen heroes, I would like to describe the life of a very special man who bravely fought for this nation, was wounded in combat, survived the arduous of war, and came home to live a long life as a husband, a father, and a grandfather.

Private, First Class (PFC) Jesse Contreras, a California native, was drafted into the United States Army as an infantryman during the Second World War. As a Mexican-American during the 1940s, he may not have been completely accepted by his country and may have been seen by some as a second-class citizen. Jesse Contreras held no grudges, however, and when his country called upon him to defend the very freedoms and rights that may not have been fully extended to him or his family, Jesse did not hesitate. After basic training, PFC Contreras was bound for Europe as part of the 104th Infantry Division, 413th Infantry Brigade, 3rd Battalion, Company “I”, under the brilliant command of Major General Terry de la Mesa Allen, himself an Hispanic-American.

The Timberwolves entered the war in the Autumn of 1944 and had quickly becomelegendary for the ferocious fighting that took place and because the men quickly proved themselves as agile combatants against the deeply entrenched and veteran units of the German Wehrmacht in France. The Division was engaged in sustained combat for approximately 195 days across Northern France towards the German frontier. The Allies were methodically driving the German forces from France. It would be only a matter of time before the Allies would be fighting on German soil on the way to Berlin. As the vice closed in on Germany, Hitler and the German General Staff planned for one last offensive against the Allies.

The strong German offensive, launched the morning of December 16, 1944 became known as the “Ardennes Offensive” or “Battle of the Bulge” and the 104th was directed to prepare an all-out defense of its sector. This delayed the planned crossing of the Roer river until 3:30 a.m., February 23, 1945 when the major offensive action to reach Cologne was begun. The Rhine was reached on March 7, 1945 whereupon Time Magazine reported, ‘‘The Germans fought for the Roer River, between Aachen and Cologne, as if it were the Meuse, the Marne, and the Somme of the last war rolled into one.’’ It was in this final German offensive that PFC Contreras’ story comes to light.

The 104th Division had been engaged in fierce combat from the Roer River to the Rhine in an attempt to repulse the German onslaught. During one particularly fierce fire fight, PFC Contreras was wounded from a German grenade. The young man who was asked to do incredible things in the face of enemy fire and even risk his life for his country. It was all the more remarkable when you consider that like most men of his generation he was simply doing what was expected of him. In the years after the war, he remained in close contact with...
those survivors of Company "I" and attended many reunions of the 104th Timberwolves Association with the likes of Mr. Carlos Beltrán.

Jesse was the typical veteran of World War II in that he fought for his country and asked little in return. He became a great family man whose influence extended to his neighbors like me. It was because of his experience as a wounded veteran struggling to keep a family afloat that helped make him strong of character and a role model for me. His sacrifice was part of a proud tradition of Mexican-Americans who fought with valor and patriotism during all of America’s wars.

Mr. Speaker, this was one story about one life, among millions from that greatest of generations. It was a story about a regular family man who as a result of simply doing his duty shed his blood for his country. It was a story about a man who faced the incredible horrors of armed conflict and came home to raise a wonderful family. The United States was built by people like Jesse Conteras and is in many ways the land of the free because it is the home of the brave.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. Conteras for his service to his country and for the kindness he showed me as a little boy. I want to also thank his wife Mary and her children who continue to be an inspiration for me for the strength and love of family that they continue to share to this very day. The world is a safer place because of the likes of Jesse Conteras and the millions of other American veterans. It was an honor to have known him and to have learned from him. May God bless his family and God bless the United States of America. Thank you.

TRIBUTE TO CARLOS BELTRÁN
HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Carlos Beltrán, an outstanding Puerto Rican athlete and a very successful baseball player. On November 10, 1999, Carlos was selected as the 1999 American League Rookie of the Year by the Baseball Writers Association of America. Carlos previously was honored as the league’s top rookie by Baseball America, the Sporting News, and Baseball Digest.

Born in Manati, P.R., Carlos turned in Rookie of the Year performance, hitting at a .293 clip with 112 runs scored, 22 home runs and 108 RBIs. He became the first American League rookie to collect 100 RBIs in a season since Mark McGwire in 1987 (118) and the first big league rookie with 100 RBIs since Los Angeles’ Mike Piazza in 1993 (112).

Mr. Speaker, Carlos was the Royals’ 2nd-round pick in the 1995 June Free Agent Draft. He has never played a game at the Triple-A level, as he made the jump from Double-A Wichita to Kansas City in September of last season. The 22-year-old was second in the American League with 663 at-bats, tied for third with 16 outfield assists and was seventh with 194 hits. He led A.L. rookies in runs, hits, home runs, RBIs, multi-hit games (54), total bases (301), stolen bases (27) and on-base percentage (.337).

Carlos has established numerous Royals rookie records in 1999, as he produced one of the best all-around seasons of any player in club history with 22 homers, 27 stolen bases, 108 RBIs, 112 runs and 16 outfield assists.

Through his dedication, discipline, and success in baseball, Mr. Beltrán serves as a role model for millions of youngsters in the United States and Puerto Rico who dream of succeeding, like him, in the world of baseball.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Carlos Beltrán for his contributions and dedication to baseball, as well as for serving as a role model for the youth of Puerto Rico and the U.S.A.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN INITIATIVE FOR MALE HEALTH IMPROVEMENT
HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK
OF MICHIGAN
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to a tragic health care crisis that currently exists among African-American men in my state of Michigan, as well as across the nation, with regard to undiagnosed and undertreated chronic diseases. Research has established that African-Americans exhibit a greater prevalence of chronic diseases than the general population—including diabetes, hypertension, eye disease and stroke. And African-American men often suffer disproportionately.

For example, diabetes is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in African-American men. Persons affected by diabetes suffer higher rates (often double) of serious preventable complications, including blindness, lower extremity amputation and end-stage renal disease. Poorly controlled diabetics is also a “gateway” condition in that it leads to cardiovascular disease (including hypertension), accounting for more than two-thirds of diabetes-related deaths. These unnecessary deaths are due to underlying atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease and result in heart attacks. Uncontrolled diabetes progressively leads to deterioration in health status, poorer quality of life, and ultimately, premature mortality. It is increasingly clear that serious measures must be implemented in the short-term to address the chronic disease health crisis affecting African-American men in Michigan and to turn these troubling statistics around for the longer term.

Scientific studies show that these complications are preventable, and measures to implement prevention plans must be taken now. As the Federal Government evaluates the investment it should make in this particularly important area of minority and community health, I would strongly encourage cultivating partnerships with integrated health systems in the private sector who have years of substantive experience in designing highly effective community-based health programs.

I have recently become aware of the successful efforts of the Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, MI, to address the crisis through the establishment of the African-American Initiative for Male Health Improvement (AIM-HI). AIM-HI is reporting outstanding results and assistance for people who suffer prevalent chronic diseases. AIM-HI provides test results, patient education and participant referrals, monitoring appointment compliance and providing assistance with finding treatment for uninsured patients who test positive. The focus of AIM-HI program services is in the Metropolitan Detroit area, where 75 percent of the Michigan target population resides.

In order to reach the largest number of people in the African-American male population, AIM-HI provides program services throughout the community at churches, community centers, senior centers, parks, barber shops, union halls, and fraternal organization halls.

In addition to screening, educational, and treatment access services, AIM-HI is also developing a tool to evaluate the quality of health care delivered to African-American men with diabetes and other chronic diseases. This “report card” assesses health care quality and effectiveness across a set of performance indicators that have been developed jointly by a panel of experts and community advocates. This initiative, sponsored by the Henry Ford Health System, is now in an embryonic stage and has had to confine itself to a narrow target program and program scope due to limited resources. Yet, it is resoundingly clear that this particular model has the potential to make a significant impact in affecting positive outcomes and health status improvement for African-American males.

I would hope that as the Department of Health and Human Services develops its budget for Fiscal Year 2000, strong consideration will be given to investing federal resources in collaborative partnerships with integrated health systems in urban settings that have the expertise to develop innovative models for minority health improvements.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Chairman of the Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee, Mr. PORTER, and the ranking minority member, Mr. OBEY, for their clear commitment to improving the quality of health care for all Americans in Fiscal Year 2000. I look forward to working with the subcommittee in the next session of Congress to increase support for critically needed minority health initiatives.

Recognizing the Contributions of Sonosite, Inc.

HON. JAY INSLEE
OF WASHINGTON
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, November 16, 1999

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize Sonosite, Inc., a company located in my home State of Washington. Sonosite is a spin-off from ATL Ultrasound, has revolutionized the quality and portability of ultrasound equipment by using advanced technology to provide for ultrasound delivery through a handheld device that represents and their patients around the country will benefit from this new high-tech, ultra-portable diagnostic tool that is expected to expand the use of ultrasound in medical care.