

counts, and yes, character is essential. So let God guide you through your trials you will face in college, your career, your marriage, and as a parent, and let those "trials make perseverance, perseverance your character, and let character produce in you hope" (Romans 5:3-4). So I'd like to congratulate you class of 1999. We made it and we finished the ride successfully, but I'd like to leave you with the words of Abraham Lincoln. He said, "Fame is a vapor, popularity an accident, and riches take wings. Only one thing endures forever and that is your character." Thank you.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL
BUSINESS DISASTER ASSISTANCE ACT

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for the purpose of introducing the Small Business Disaster Assistance Act.

This is a two-part proposal that seeks to provide both immediate assistance to viable small businesses and agricultural enterprises when first dealing with the damage wrought by a disaster, and more long-term assistance which seeks to provide them with the needed lift as they continue to work towards normalcy.

My bill creates a program whereby viable small businesses and agricultural enterprises would be eligible for a grant of up to \$30,000 in order to provide them with the immediate assistance they need when dealing with a disaster. Additionally, the bill creates a loan program that acknowledges the great difficulties small business owners and farmers encounter during the first year following a disaster by allowing for a one-year deferral on any repayments toward the loan, and, furthermore, allows the recipient to pay back the principal of that loan before the interest.

This is a compassionate, reasonable proposal that seeks to provide small businesses and farmers with assistance during a time when they need it most. I'd like to thank my colleague from New Jersey, Congressman BOB FRANKS, for his important contribution in drafting this legislation, and I hope that our colleagues will join us in this effort to assist small business owners and farmers whose lives have been fundamentally diminished by natural disaster.

ROMANIA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Romanian Caucus, I rise today to enter into the record remarks in support of Romania. Mr. Speaker, the Heads of State and Government participating in the Istanbul Summit will designate the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for the year 2001.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Romania has been fostering support for its candidacy since 1996, when President Emil Constantinescu announced his country's bid for the OSCE Chair in 2001. Romania enjoys U.S. support and has succeeded to build consensus around its candidacy among full OSCE members. Romania will be entrusted to chair the OSCE in 2001, and it will join Austria and Norway in the OSCE Troika, starting January 2000.

The United States and Romania in 1997, established a strategic partnership resulting in close cooperation and consultations on all issues of common interest, particularly: NATO policies; promoting stability and security in Southeastern Europe, combating non-traditional threats; military and economic reforms in Romania and its region. Romania has also been a key supporter of U.S. and NATO policy in the Kosovo crisis, assisting the U.S. and NATO in actions meant to bring stability to the Balkans.

Romania's government and Parliament approved without reservation overflight rights for NATO aircraft at the height of the Kosovo conflict. Romania is among the regional countries which observes the embargo against Former Republic Yugoslavia, despite significant costs. Romania has proven to be a reliable partner of the U.S. and NATO and is consistent in improving its credentials for future integration with NATO. All Romanian political forces, as well as a large majority of the people, support the goals of integration with NATO and the EU. In December 1999, Romania will host the Southeast European Defense Ministerial (SEDM), in which the United States participates.

Within this framework, Romania takes part in efforts to operationalize the Southeast European Multinational Peace Force, the first ever attempt at peaceful military cooperation in the region. Romania is the Chairman in Office of the Southeast European Cooperation Process and, as such, has been instrumental in promoting joint positions and actions of countries neighboring Serbia.

Active participants in the U.S.-supported Southeast European Cooperative Initiative (SECI), Romania has lead the efforts to conclude a regional Agreement for the fight against transborder crime and corruption which was signed in Bucharest, on 26 May 1999. Romania hosts the SECI Regional Center for the fight against transborder crime and corruption. The Center was inaugurated on 16 November 1999 and acts as a critical instrument for promoting a healthy business climate in Southeastern Europe, combating non-traditional threats and transborder crime.

Therefore, it is suggested that: The United States Congress expresses support for Romania's nomination as OSCE Chair in 2001 and readiness to cooperate with Romania in the exercise of the resulting responsibilities. The United States Congress looks forward to sending a large delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Romania, in July 2000. The United States Congress acknowledges and highlights Romania's relevance as a regional role-model for inter-ethnic cooperation, steady evolution towards mature democracy as well as decisive efforts towards a functioning market economy, against the background of difficult challenges of the reform process.

November 19, 1999

The United States Congress encourages an enhancement of U.S.-Romanian Strategic Partnership, in order to enable Romania to perform as Chairman in Office of the OSCE and to exercise effectively its OSCE area, which includes the Euro-Atlantic as well as Eurasian space. The United States Congress expresses openness to expand inter-parliamentary links with the Romanian legislature, in order to help promote the achievement of common goals and interest.

A TRIBUTE TO MARTIN STEIN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of Lieutenant Martin Stein, a member of the New York City Police Department.

At a time, when police departments around this nation are under attack because of accusations of brutality, wrongful deaths and generally poor community relations, Lt. Stein continues to demonstrate a sense of professionalism and commitment which has made him a credit to law enforcement. He joined the police force in 1981 and has held a variety of positions of increasing responsibility during this time period. With a career that has covered various precincts in Manhattan and Brooklyn, Lieutenant Stein is currently the Special Operations Lieutenant for the 81st precinct. In this capacity, he is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the precincts specialized units: Anti-Crime; Street Narcotics; Warrants; Field Training and Community Policing Unit. He also ensures that these units work with the patrol force to respond to the calls and needs of the community.

Under Lieutenant Stein's leadership, the 81st Precinct has seen an overall 53% reduction in crime. It is particularly significant that homicides have been reduced by 37% and shootings by 70%. These statistics indicate a real quality of life improvement for my constituents who reside in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn which is served by the 81st precinct.

Lieutenant Stein was recently married to his wife, Mary, and has a 14 year old son Peter from a previous marriage. After three years at York College in Queens, he is currently pursuing his Bachelor's degree in the New York State Regents Degree Program. I commend his fine work to the attention of my colleagues.

THANKSGIVING

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 18, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, three hundred and seventy-eight years ago, Plymouth Colony Governor William Bradford "sent four men fowling, so they might in a special manner rejoice together after they had gathered the fruit of their labor." This event marked the