This is a victory for Texas dairy farmers. If Option 1–B had been implemented, Texas dairy farmers would have lost $56 million in income. With this agreement, we are preventing that loss and preserving the East Texas dairy farm.

The budget also contains a number of important Democratic victories, including funding for 100,000 new teachers, after school programs, Head Start, school construction, and the COPS program. These victories also include extensions of important tax credits for research and development, the Work Incentive tax credit, Welfare to Work credit, and Alternative Minimum Tax relief for individuals.

This year we have also given our service men and women a pay raise and provided funding for increased workload at Red River Army Depot. Specifically, the FY00 budget appropriates $384 million for upgrading the Bradley Fighting Vehicle. Finally, this bill puts aside $134.7 billion for refunding the national debt and helping ensure that future generations can share in the economic prosperity we are now experiencing as a nation.

Although I am pleased with the positive aspects of this bill, I am deeply disturbed by its most troubling provisions. These include an across-the-board cut upon which Republicans have insisted. Instead of eliminating the irresponsible member earmarks that load-up this budget with unnecessary spending or cutting Member pay raises, Republicans have opted for a damaging, indiscriminate across-the-board cut. Moreover, they rely on accounting gimmicks to disguise the real spending in this bill, and they tell us this budget won’t break the caps. This bill has not been scored, so we have no choice but to accept Republican claims that it won’t dip into the Social Security trust fund.

I find the Republicans’ failure to cut the Congressional pay raise particularly unconscionable. This bill would actually exempt the Congressional pay raise from the across-the-board cut. This provision is extremely upsetting, considering that the Congress twice voted against this exemption.

Republican tactics throughout the budget process have produced an imperfect bill. Their unwillingness to negotiate with Democrats from the beginning is the reason behind this 11th hour budget bill. Unfortunately, Republicans put off budget negotiations until the very last minute in favor of partisan rhetoric and have thereby prevented Congress from passing a Patients’ Bill of Rights, funding a Medicare prescription drug benefit for seniors, increasing the minimum wage for working Americans, and providing meaningful tax relief for families.

These realities make it especially difficult for me to cast my vote in favor of this bill. The most troubling consequence of this bill is the potential for detrimental effect of the across-the-board cut on veterans’ healthcare. I will vote for the Motion to Recommit for this reason, and for all the other reasons I have cited, in hopes that these problems can be addressed before final passage of the bill.

However, should the Motion to Recommit fail, I will support final passage because, although it is imperfect, this bill is a product of compromise, and not everyone will agree on every aspect of a compromise. All in all, I support this bill because, despite its shortcomings, it is good news for the people of East Texas.

BEYOND OUR DUTY: FORD-BRESICA AND LAURINDA SPEAR INDUCTED TO THE INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE HALL OF FAME

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
OF FLORIDA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Monday, November 22, 1999
Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Bernardo Fort-Brescia and his wife, Laurinda Spear, on being inducted as members of the 1999 Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame.

In 1977, Bernardo and Laurinda, both graduates of Ivy League architectural schools, founded the Miami based Arquitectonica which has been making headlines with a brand of unconventional modernism that combines clarity and formal rigor with unusual daring in color and wit. The firm’s designs have won numerous awards from the American Institute of Architects and Progressive Architecture.

Bernardo and Laurinda have worked on many memorable designs, including the Miami City Ballet headquarters in Miami Beach, the American Airlines Arena in Miami, and the future Westin New York at Times Square on New York’s 42nd Street. These projects have been featured in many magazines and professional journals including Time, Newsweek, Domus, and Architectural Digest. Bernardo and Laurinda have lectured around the world and their work had been exhibited in many prestigious museums and galleries throughout the Western Hemisphere and Europe.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Bernardo Fort-Brescia, FAIA and Laurinda Spear, FAIA on their induction to the 1999 Interior Design Magazine Hall of Fame.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2116, VETERANS MILLENNIUM HEALTH CARE AND BENEFITS ACT

SPEECH OF HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, November 16, 1999
Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2116, the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act of 1996. As a conferee on this legislation, I am grateful the Senate accepted one particular provision, my proposal to add bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma to the Department of Veterans Affairs presumption list for radiogenic cancers.

For the last ten years, I have worked to add this lung cancer to the VA’s presumption list for service-connected veterans. During the 105th and 106th Congresses, the House passed my legislation to add this cancer to the VA’s presumption list. This year, we have convinced our Senate colleagues of the need to put this provision into law because of the VA’s...
Bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma is not considered a smoker's cancer. During a recent class action lawsuit in the state of Florida, the jury specifically excluded bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma from the list of lung cancers compensable due to smoking. Furthermore, the National Research Council cited Department of Energy studies in the BEIR V report stating that "bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma is the most common cause of delayed death from inhaled plutonium 239."

I know of this firsthand because I have been working with Joan McCarthy, a New Jersey resident, who lost her husband, Tom, to bronchiolo alveolar carcinoma in 1981. Tom had served as the navigator on the U.S.S. McKinley which participated in Operation Wig-wam, an underwater atomic test in the Pacific that produced a surge of mist which Tom inhaled. Twenty days later, he died of lung cancer, a father and husband who was only in his early forties. Passage of the Veterans Millennium Health Care Act today will add this cancer to the VA’s presumption list and thus ensure that Joan McCarthy and other veterans and their widows receive the compensation which they need and deserve.

Another provision which I authored as free standing legislation and is now in the conference report is a respite care provision. For the first time, we are giving the VA the ability to contract out for respite care services. Until now, if a veteran’s care giver, be it his spouse or adult child, needed a short break, their only recourse was to wait for a bed to be made available at either a VA or state nursing home. The extra burden of transporting the veteran to and from the veterans hospital almost makes this self-defeating and it is witnessed by the fact that only 232 cases of respite care were provided by the VA during the 1998 fiscal year.

The need for respite care cannot be underestimated. A few years ago, my wife, Marie, was the primary care giver for my mother who was dying of brain cancer. We chose to take care of her in our home and my wife was the one who saw to her needs. Consequently, I know how important it is for the care giver, as well as the veteran, to be provided with the occasional break off that water. Tom died of their own lives for a few hours or a few days. In the long run, this will significantly improve the quality of life and care of our veterans and unquestionably save the VA money in the long run. Most Americans want to remain in their own homes or with their families for as long as possible.

The benefits of respite care cannot be understated. According to the Caregiver Assistance Network, family and volunteer caregivers provide 85% of all home care given in the United States. However, our veterans’ care-givers need our help. In a California statewide survey taken by the Family Caregiver Alliance, 58% of the caregivers showed signs of clinical depression. When asked, they responded that their two greatest needs were emotional support and respite care. On average, they are providing 10.5 hours of care per day. Providing the VA with the ability to contract with the nearest nursing home, adult day care centers, or sending someone to the veterans’ homes will make a real difference in the day to day quality of life for a veteran and his or her family.

The Veterans Millennium Health Care Act also requires the VA to provide needed nursing home care for veterans who are 70% service-connected or in need of such care for a service-connected condition. It also lifts the VA’s six month limit on adult day health care and it allows the VA to expand the scope of the state home program to encompass all extended care services such as respite care, adult day health care, domiciliary care, and other alternatives to institutional care. It also guarantees emergency care for uninsured veterans and reinstates preferential eligibility for recipients of the Purple Heart. It also requires the VA to establish a policy regarding chiropractic treatment, a provision which I first introduced as legislation during my first term in Congress. And finally, it authorizes payments to the surviving spouses of former POWs who were rated totally disabled due to any service-connected or in need of such care for a service-connected condition. It also lifts the BIA APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2000

Let me first highlight the funding changes. H.R. 3421 provides an additional $616,282,000 in funding, after scorekeeping adjustments.

Under the Department of Justice, it provides an additional $7,000,000 for COPS in 2000, including: (1) $18,000,000 for the COPS program—$2,000,000 for hiring, $10,000,000 for community prosecutors; and $6,000,000 for management and administration; and it moves $130,000,000 for crime identification technology from State and Local Law Enforcement to COPS; (2) $10,635,000 for General Legal Activities—$10,053,000 for Civil Rights Division; and $582,000 for Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States; and (3) $1,147,000 for the U.S. Parole Commission.

Under the Department of Commerce, it provides an additional $45,000,000, including: (1) $140,000,000 for the COPS program—$117,500,000 for hiring, $10,000,000 for community prosecutors; and $12,500,000 for management and administration; and it moves $130,000,000 for crime identification technology from State and Local Law Enforcement to COPS; (2) $10,635,000 for General Legal Activities—$10,053,000 for Civil Rights Division; and $582,000 for Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States; and (3) $1,147,000 for the U.S. Parole Commission.

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