

the time of slavery. Brave men like Nat Turner, Gabriel Prosser, and Denmark Vesey, for example, organized and led doomed but valiant slave rebellions against slave owners and the militias that maintained the institution of slavery with force. Abolitionists like Frederick Douglass and Sojourner Truth undermined the institution of slavery by speaking, writing, and lobbying against it—at considerable personal risk. And brave individuals like Harriet Tubman risked their lives and their hard-won freedom to return to slave-holding states to lead other African Americans north to freedom along the Underground Railroad. During the Civil War, over 200,000 African American men fought in the Union Army and Navy—to free their enslaved brethren, to prove that African Americans were as brave and as tough as whites, and to improve the claim of all African Americans to the rights already enjoyed by whites.

In the post-Reconstruction era, African Americans like Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois, and Mary Church Terrell shaped attitudes within the African American community and won the respect of many white Americans across the country.

In the early 1900s, prominent African Americans like W.E.B. DuBois and Ida Wells-Barnett worked to form the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, an organization dedicated to the elimination of segregation and discrimination. Also in those years, Marcus Garvey led an influential black nationalist movement and fought institutional racism in the United States.

In the 1920s, '30s, and '40s, A. Philip Randolph worked to organize African American workers and end the division of the labor movement along racial lines. He also worked diligently to end discrimination in the military and the government.

And since the end of World War II, African American leaders like Thurgood Marshall, Martin Luther King, Adam Clayton Powell, Jesse Jackson, Colin Powell, and Ralph Bunche have made their mark on American history—in our courts, our schools, our government, our politics, the military, and in foreign affairs. African American women like Fannie Lou Hamer, Shirley Chisholm, and Barbara Jordan broke old barriers and won the respect of millions of Americans for their integrity, their intelligence, their dedication, and their professional accomplishments.

This recitation of African American leaders is by no means all-inclusive. In fact, it touches upon only a few of the African American leaders who have shaped this country's history. Their names are intended merely to document the observation that African American leaders have played an important positive role in our nation's past.

As part of the annual observation of Black History Month, it is instructive to remind ourselves that in the face of racism, discrimination, and violence, many African Americans have successfully taken action to change our society and determine their own destiny within it. I believe that African Americans today can draw great satisfaction and strength from that history.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A BILL TO INCREASE THE ANNUAL CAP ON STATES' AUTHORITY TO ISSUE THEIR OWN TAX-EXEMPT PRIVATE ACTIVITY BONDS AND TO INDEX SUCH AMOUNTS IN THE FUTURE

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 1999

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. NEAL, together with a number of other colleagues, in introducing our bill, "The State and Local Investment Opportunity Act of 1999." The bill would raise the annual cap on states' authority to issue their own tax-exempt "Private Activity" bonds to \$75 times population (\$225 million if greater) and provides for an inflation adjustment based on the consumer price index for calendar years after 2000. The bill would be effective for calendar years after 1999.

A similar bill was introduced in the 105th Congress and was enacted without the indexation provision and the increase in the annual cap is being phased in starting in 2003. Thus, our new bill is the same as last year's bill except for the indexation and effective date. Chairman ARCHER of the Ways and Means Committee was totally cooperative in our effort last Congress, and indeed was key in including our original proposal in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1998, which the House passed but the Senate did not take up. Nevertheless, the Chairman persisted in including the phased-in provision in the smaller so-called "extender bill" that was enacted.

We believe this change is important to all of us, in that tax-exempt Private Activity Bonds finance affordable ownership and rental housing, manufacturing job creation, environmental cleanup, infrastructure and student loans. Nationwide, demand for bond authority exceeded supply by nearly 50 percent in 1997, according to the National Council of State Housing Agencies. This is a bipartisan issue. Three-quarters of the House supported our bill in the 105th Congress and a majority of the Senate cosponsored identical Senate legislation. The nation's governors and mayors, other state and local governmental groups, and the public finance community all strongly support full bond cap restoration.

On the possibility that a large tax package moves forward this session, we believe it is important to reconsider the effective date issue, as well as the indexing for inflation going forward.

We urge our colleagues to join us in cosponsoring this important legislation—"The State and Local Investment Opportunity Act of 1999."

IN HONOR OF CASIMIR PULASKI

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 1999

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the millions of Polish Americans, the city of

Chicago, the people of Illinois and citizens of our nation, I rise today in honor of Casimir Pulaski, a patriot and military hero and the Father of the American Cavalry.

While countless words have been spoken and many volumes have been written about Casimir Pulaski's life, I believe this contribution to his native home and his bravery on behalf of his adopted land are immeasurable.

Casimir Pulaski was born on March 4, 1747 in Warka, Poland. He was a valiant fighter during Poland's war of independence from Russia. But for his distinguished service toward freedom and independence on behalf of his people and his beloved Poland, he was forced to flee and became an exile.

He remained a voice for just causes and an unwavering spirit for freedom. That is why he joined in America's struggle against the colonists and fought along side General George Washington during the Revolutionary War. He was named brigadier general and the first commander of the American Cavalry. For his bravery and service, he was bestowed, and rightly so, the title of "Father of the American Cavalry."

He paid the ultimate price for his convictions and was fatally wounded during the Battle of Savannah.

Casimir Pulaski is an American hero, who fought for freedom, with honor and courage. As we commemorate this legend, I also wish to recognize the countless accomplishments and great contributions of Polish Americans to our nation.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEATH TAX ELIMINATION ACT

HON. JENNIFER DUNN

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 25, 1999

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, it's been said that only with our government are you given a "certificate at birth, a license at marriage, and a bill at death." Today I am introducing the Death Tax Elimination Act, which seeks to phase-out the onerous death tax. The death tax rates will be reduced by 5 percentage points each year until the highest rate bracket—55 percent—reaches zero in 2010. As these rates are lowered to zero, more and more families will no longer be forced to give the family savings to Uncle Sam and the family business will be saved. In an era when the productivity of American workers is creating huge budget surpluses, it is incomprehensible for this tax to live on. The death tax deserves to die.

One of the most compelling aspects of the American dream is to make life better for your children and loved ones. Yet, the current tax treatment of individuals and families at death is so onerous that when one dies, their children are many times forced to sell and turn over more than half of their inheritance just to pay the taxes. It takes place at an agonizing time for the family; when families should be grieving for a loved one with friends and relatives, rather than spending painful hours with lawyers and bureaucrats.

By confiscating between 37 percent and 55 percent of an estate, the death tax punishes