

Mr. Speaker, in the 105th Congress when we passed the Commemorative Coin Program Act, the insular areas were omitted from the legislation. Current law authorizes the minting of twenty-five cent coins to commemorate each of the 50 states through state-specific designs on one side of the coins. It is a ten-year program, with five states being honored each year.

This bill amends current law by adding an eleventh year to the program. During this year, the District of Columbia and the four insular areas, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, would also be recognized through the minting of twenty-five cent coins. Commemorative designs on one side of the coins would be submitted by the chief executive officer of these areas.

This legislation is very timely for my Congressional district, Mr. Speaker. American Samoa will celebrate the centennial of its union with the United States in the year 2000.

American Samoa has a long, proud history of supporting the United States—ever since the traditional leaders of the main island of Tutuila ceded their island to the United States on April 17, 1900. Tutuila's beautiful harbor is the deepest in the South Pacific, and the port village of Pago Pago was used as a coaling station for U.S. naval ships in the early part of the century and as a support base for U.S. soldiers during World War II. To this day, American Samoa serves as a refueling point for U.S. naval ships and military aircraft.

At the present time, American Samoans have a per capita enlistment rate in the U.S. military which is as high as any state or U.S. territory. Our sons and daughters have served in record numbers in every U.S. military engagement from World War II to the present operations in the Middle East. We have stood by the United States in good times and bad, and we will continue to do so.

Congress has recognized American Samoa's proud heritage on numerous occasions, and many of my constituents have asked that the United States Government provide special recognition of the 100th year of our union. I believe it would be most fitting to acknowledge the centennial anniversary of our relationship with the United States with the issuance of a commemorative coin, and I am optimistic that this bill will become public law later this year.

O'DEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay humble tribute to the students, teachers and parents of O'Dea Elementary School in Colorado for their efforts to help the needy during the holidays. I commend the faculty of the school as well as all the students, parents and individuals who contributed to their special canned food drive. Their selfless dedication has provided warmth, comfort and happiness to families in Colorado. That the school produced over 1,200 pounds of food, and funds from candy cane sales for the benefit of the needy is testament to the true meaning of the

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

spirit of Christmas and Hanukkah. Let us remember, as these good people have, that the holiday season is one of giving, one of joy, and one of hope. Let the children's example during the holidays be a beacon to us all throughout the year.

ST. LUKE BAPTIST CHURCH
CELEBRATES 120 YEARS

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 120th anniversary of the establishment of Saint Luke Baptist Church. I am pleased to enter into the RECORD the church's inspiring history.

Saint Luke Baptist Church was organized at Fort Totten, District of Columbia on March 23, 1879. It evolved from a series of religious meetings, held over a two year period in the home of Brother Solomon Kemp. Other original members were Brothers George Brooks, James Clark, Walker Clark, Frank Grinage, Sydney Walker, Anthony Walker, and Sister Lucy Jenkins. Reverend Shelton Miller was the spiritual leader of the group and became the first pastor. The group continued to worship in the home of Brother Kemp until the increase in membership made those quarters inadequate. The first church was erected at Shepherd Road and Magnolia Avenue, NW. As the membership continued to grow, it became necessary to move again. The new church was located at Shepherd Road and Georgia Avenue and thrived there for thirty-six years when the site was purchased to create what is now known as Missouri Avenue. In 1928 a new edifice was erected at Fourteenth and Peabody Streets NW. It is worthy of note that the three churches were built within a one mile radius and were constructed by Reverend Shelton Miller, church members, and friends. Saint Luke was a beacon of light in the Brightwood area and obtained its Charter of Incorporation on January 15, 1898.

Saint Luke Baptist Church thrived under the inspired leadership of Reverend Shelton Miller (1879–1931), Reverend Arthur Chichester (1931–48), and Reverend John Lucas (1948–72). Saint Luke's anointed and dynamic pastoral ministries now flourish under the Reverend Aubrey C. Lewis (1974–present).

Church outreach programs are diverse and include all age groups. The Bible study program has evolved into the Saint Luke Bible Institute, the Senior Adult Ministry (SAM) provides entertaining cultural and spiritual activities for retired and senior members, church retreats provide opportunities for study and reflection, and the day care center is a source of employment for church members and community residents as well as a source of revenue for the church. The Youth and Young Adult Ministry (Y.Y.A.M.) provides Christian programs for the church's youngest age groups. In 1998, the outreach program expanded to a new level with the initiation of a Cable Television Ministry.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the many sacrifices, freely

made, required to write each chapter of Saint Luke's rich history and to celebrate a spiritual and civic anchor in the Brightwood community.

SENIOR CITIZEN PROPERTY TAX
REDUCTION VOUCHERS

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation along with several of my colleagues in the Massachusetts Delegation to alter the federal tax treatment of real property tax reduction vouchers received by senior citizens for volunteer work.

Several towns in Massachusetts have tried to ease the problem senior citizens who live on fixed incomes face due to rising property taxes. These towns have allowed senior citizens to perform volunteer work for the town in exchange for a voucher that reduces their property taxes by up to \$500. Seniors have volunteered in libraries, recreational centers, parks and senior centers in exchange for these vouchers.

The House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts passed a bill last year to exempt these vouchers from income for purposes of the State income tax. While the State Senate did not take up the bill last year, I am informed that this issue will be brought up again in the State Legislature this year.

The legislation I am introducing would exclude from gross income vouchers issued by a government unit and received by senior citizens in exchange for volunteer work. The voucher could only offset real property taxes imposed by the government unit that issued the voucher, and no real property tax deduction would be allowed to the extent of the amount excluded from gross income by the voucher. The legislation also exempts these vouchers from employment taxes, and senior citizens who are at least 65 are eligible.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation enhances an important and creative program being implemented in many towns in Massachusetts. I very much hope we can address this issue this year, and encourage other towns in Massachusetts and across the country to ease the financial plight of many of our senior citizens.

COMMEMORATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF RETIRED SUPREME
COURT JUSTICE BLACKMUN

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 4, 1999

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply saddened by the passing of Retired Supreme Court Justice Harry A. Blackmun. Justice Blackmun lived a productive life of 90 years and was a well-respected legal mind. An Illinoisan by birth, Blackmun was raised in St. Paul's East Side—my lifelong home which I am today honored to represent. Before his 24