

without shifting the risk onto the backs of individuals. This is meaningful, responsible legislation, and I intend to do my best to make sure my colleagues give it the hearing it deserves.

H.R. 475, MILITARY SPOUSES

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced H.R. 475, extending eligibility to use the military health care system and commissary stores to un-remarried former spouses of a member of the uniformed services in certain circumstances.

Current law provides health and commissary benefits to un-remarried former spouses who meet the 20/20/20 rule—those who were married to military personnel for at least 20 years, whose spouse served in the military for at least 20 years, and whose marriage and spouse's military service overlapped for 20 years.

A problem that frequently arises is that many members who retire upon attaining 20 years of service were married a year or two after entering active duty. The overlap of their service and marriage is just short of 20 years. Thus regardless of the subsequent length of marriage the spouse can never meet the criteria requiring the 20 year overlap.

H.R. 475 would eliminate this current inequity by extending to un-remarried former spouse's medical care and commissary benefits if the member performed at least 20 years of service which is creditable in determining the member's eligibility for retired pay and the former spouse was married to the member for a period of at least 17 years during those years of service.

This inequity affects not only individuals in my district, but spouses in every district across the Nation. Since the original introduction of this legislation, I have received letters and phone calls from Massachusetts, Idaho, California, Ohio, Arizona, Florida, Washington, Maryland, Kansas, and Utah.

The Department of Defense has stated that by providing a more liberal entitlement to these individuals, we would "tax" the Department's resources thus increasing the budgetary requirements. Well, I say it is worth it when I read about a woman from Arizona who was married to her husband for 36 years, but because she married him 1 year after his initial enlistment, she missed the 20-20-20 rule by 11 months. These stories are tragic, and we can do something to remedy this unfairness.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 475.

TRIBUTE TO BEVERLY PANKRAT
OF GIRL SCOUT TROOP 563

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to salute an outstanding young woman

who has been honored with the Girl Scout Gold Award by the Cahaba Girl Scout Council in Birmingham, Alabama. She is Beverly Pankrat of Girl Scout Troop 563. She has been honored for earning the highest achievement award in U.S. Girl Scouting. The Girl Scout Gold Award symbolizes outstanding accomplishments in the areas of leadership, community service, career planning and personal development. The award can be earned by a girl aged fourteen through seventeen, or in grades ninth through twelfth.

Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., an organization serving over 2.5 million girls, has awarded more than twenty thousand Girl Scout Awards to Senior Girl Scouts since the inception of the program in 1980. To receive the award, a Girl Scout must earn four interest project patches, the Career Exploration Pin, the Senior Girl Scout Challenge, as well as design and implement a Girl Scout Gold Award project. A plan for fulfilling these requirements is created by the Senior Girl Scout and carried out through close cooperation between the girl and an adult Girl Scout Volunteer.

As a member of the Cahaba Girl Scout Council, Beverly Pankrat began working toward the Girl Scout Gold Award on November 9, 1997. She completed her project, Introduction to the Internet and Web Page Design, and I believe she should receive the public recognition due her for this significant service to her community and her country.

TRIBUTE TO HERNANDO PINZON—
RETIRING AFTER 15 YEARS OF
CONGRESSIONAL SERVICE

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Hernando Pinzon, of Milwaukee, who will retire March 31, 1999, after 15 years of dedicated service on my District Office Staff.

Hernando was one of my very first hires when I was elected to Congress in a special election in the spring 1984. He has tirelessly served the residents of Wisconsin's 4th Congressional District ever since.

Hernando has a sign on his Milwaukee office door which reads "I put veterans first. May I help you?" That statement sums up Hernando's dedication to the men and women who have served, or who are currently serving, in our nation's armed forces. As my constituent liaison for veterans and military issues, Hernando works daily to ensure that these individuals receive the benefits and honors they deserve. From handling insurance and retirement matters for military families, to obtaining well-deserved military medals for service men and women that were overdue many years ago, Hernando certainly puts veterans first.

As my District Office liaison for Hispanic issues, Hernando has attended countless Hispanic Chamber of Commerce meetings and events on Milwaukee's south side. He has truly been my "eyes and ears" at Hispanic events, bringing numerous issues to my attention and making it known to the community that I am ready and willing to help.

But Hernando's first priority is of course his family. His wife Maria and his two children Carla and Hernando are the real joys of his life. I know that he is looking forward to spending more time at home. In fact I understand that Maria has enough remodeling projects lined up to keep him busy around the house for quite some time!

Best wishes, Hernando, on your well-deserved retirement. We will miss your dedication, your patience, and your quiet humor. May you and your children enjoy the years to come by bicycling, hiking and fishing as you have enjoyed many Milwaukee summertimes in the past. God Bless.

SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS
LIMIT CLARIFICATION

HON. STEVEN T. KUYKENDALL

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to clarify some comments I made on this floor last Thursday. Specifically, I spoke about the earnings limits now imposed by the Social Security laws. To clarify, there are two separate limits, one for individuals under the age of 65, and another for individuals between the age of 65 and 69. In 1999, those limits are \$9,600 and \$15,500, respectively. Individuals under the age of 65 with annual earnings of \$20,000 stand to lose \$5,200. Individuals between the ages of 65 and 69 with annual earnings of \$20,000 stand to lose \$1,500. In either event, individuals with critical expertise are encouraged not to work, to the detriment of all Americans.

JOHNSTON ATOLL

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 9, 1999

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced H.R. 478, that requires the National Labor Relations Board to assert jurisdiction over Johnston Atoll.

Johnston Atoll is an unincorporated territory located about 800 miles southwest of Hawaii. Currently, the atoll is being used for weapons disposal where military and civilian employees work with hazardous materials and under potentially dangerous conditions to dispose of chemical weapons.

Civilian workers presently on the island cannot seek the protection of safe and fair working conditions as normally provided to workers in the United States because the civilian workers on Johnston Atoll are not under the jurisdiction of the NLRB.

This is a problem that is going on 9 years. In a petition before the NLRB in 1990, 185 employees of the civilian contractor were denied recognition as a bargaining unit by the Board because the Board declined to assert jurisdiction over the territory of Johnston Atoll.

My legislation recognizes this injustice and simply states that the Board cannot decline to