

March 25, 1999

people's capitol. May their voices ring from the steps of the capitol and echo the dedication and commitment of their generation.

THE CHARITABLE GIVING TAX
RELIEF ACT

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by my Ways and Means Committee colleagues Messrs. COYNE and HERGER and Mrs. THURMAN in introducing the Charitable Giving Tax Relief Act.

Identical to a bill we introduced in the 105th Congress, the Charitable Giving Tax Relief Act will allow taxpayers who do not itemize their tax returns to deduct a portion of their charitable giving. Specifically, non-itemizers whose cumulative annual charitable donations exceed \$500 will be able to deduct 50 percent of any charitable donations over that amount.

Under current law, non-itemizers receive a standard deduction while only taxpayers who itemize their deductions receive a direct tax benefit for giving to charity. Non-itemizers make up the vast majority of tax filers with two and a half times more returns than itemizers. Moreover, non-itemizers are typically middle to lower middle income level taxpayers who, despite their modest earnings, still give quite generously to charitable causes. In fact, non-itemizers earning less than \$30,000 give the highest percentage of their household income to charity. I believe these individuals deserve a tax break for their generosity.

This idea is not new. In the early 1980s, non-itemizers did enjoy the ability to deduct a portion of their charitable giving. In the last Congress, thanks to the support of the not-for-profit community, especially Independent Sector and its member organizations, 144 colleagues cosponsored my bill. I hope to build on that success and have this legislation included in any major tax bill that we might consider during this Congress.

As direct federal subsidies to non-profit organizations are being reduced, the private sector must fill the gap to provide the necessary resources. The Charitable Giving Tax Relief Act will help in that cause by rewarding those taxpayers standing in the gap. Independent Sector believes that this bill may even encourage more giving to charitable organizations. In fact, one study projects that giving could increase by \$2.7 billion a year.

Americans have traditionally been the most generous people in the world. From churches to schools, the arts to social services, we fund and support all types of charitable causes. I believe altruism is the basis for that generosity. However, I realize that those who give can be sensitive to tax considerations. My ultimate goal is to remove the tax code as an obstacle to charitable giving.

I encourage my colleagues to join Mr. COYNE, Mr. HERGER, Mrs. THURMAN and me in our effort to reward and encourage the American tradition of philanthropy by agreeing to sponsor the Charitable Giving Relief Act.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN HONOR OF THE 60TH DIAMOND
WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF
PANTELIS AND DESPINA
MARANGOS

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pantelis and Despina Marangos as they celebrate their 60th Diamond Wedding Anniversary. They celebrated their joyous occasion on Sunday, November 8, 1998.

Pantelis, born in Kalavassos, Cyprus, the son of Mary and John Shakalisk, was known as "Peter the Carpenters' son," thus the name Marangos. Despina was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the daughter of Zaharias Kyriacou from Cyprus and Chrisanthy Protoulis from Greece.

At the age of 18, Pantelis arrived at Ellis Island at the height of the Great Depression with five dollars in his pocket. But he soon found work and within a few years as a skilled pastry chef. Despina came to New York as a child and attended P.S. 116 and Julia Richmond High School. During the Depression, she worked in the Garment District with her mother.

In 1938, Pantelis and Despina met, fell in love and married. In 1943, their first child, Mary Anna, was born. Their son, John Zaharias, was born in 1950.

During World War II, Pantelis served in the Navy as a Petty Officer on a mine sweeper and took part in the invasion of Anzio and St. Tropez while Despina served on the Home Front, working in defense plants.

Despina, who had the responsibility of caring for her parents in addition to her own family, found time to be a Den Mother and an Officer in both the Parents' Association and the Women's Auxiliary.

After his discharge from the Navy, Pantelis returned to the restaurant business where he was a manager, chef and proprietor of Michael's Restaurant until his retirement in 1975.

Despina worked at Macy's Department store during the 1959 Christmas season and retired after 30 years of dedicated service in 1989.

In 1966, Pantelis suffered a stroke and once again demonstrated the courage and bravery he showed when coming to this country alone. In the past two years he has become a living symbol for the handicapped.

The doctors told Despina that he would never function, yet today he is proving them wrong with a combination of therapies. The Chian Federation honored his courage in 1998. Despina and other Hellenic immigrants were also recognized at a ceremony on Ellis Island.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to bring to your attention this important milestone in the life of a remarkable couple. It is an honor to have them in my district.

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A TRIBUTE TO PAUL THOMPSON

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 25, 1999

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention today the fine work and outstanding public service of my good friend, Paul Thompson. Paul is looking forward to a full and productive retirement after serving Congress and the nation as a professional staff member of the House Appropriations Committee for 29 years.

Paul first came to the Hill in 1970 as a detailee to the VA-HUD and Independent Agencies Subcommittee from the Department of Interior where he worked in the Bureau of Indian Affairs budget office. It was a VA-HUD that Paul found his home away from home and where he made himself over the years, quite literally, an invaluable part of the Appropriations process. With his knowledge of the legislative process, he became a technician's technician; he knew, better than most, how to put a bill together effectively from start to finish. Because Paul was never politically motivated, he has always been perceived by his colleagues, and more importantly, by Members of the House, as unfailingly fair and intellectually honest.

During his tenure as both professional staff and majority clerk of the subcommittee, Paul served under six subcommittee chairs including Chairmen WALSH, LEWIS, Stokes, Traxler, Boland and Evins. Not surprisingly, during that time, Paul and his chairmen developed remarkable professional relationships as well as genuine lasting friendships that continue to prosper and endure.

There are, of course, a few things everyone should know about Paul. He loves a good laugh, maintains a work ethic from another era, and enjoys his Guinness in a coffee mug. When he's not working, you will find Paul on the water in his Ray Ban sunglasses with a cold drink in one hand while casting a line with the other. In fact, I expect many of Paul's friends will soon be receiving invitations to join him in his newly acquired fishing boat which he will tow behind the largest bright red pickup truck ever seen in the Rayburn garage.

Those who know Paul best have nothing but the finest things to say about him. "A greater guy I have never worked with," said one long-time Appropriations staffer. Another, remembering how he single-handedly ate two dozen crabs while on a daytime cruise of the Chesapeake Bay, observed, "Paul loves his crab but he's never crabby himself."

Mr. Speaker, professional staff come and go in the People's House but few ever make the type of contribution made by my good friend, Paul Thompson. As he begins his well-deserved retirement, Paul leaves an institution filled with many admirers who love and respect him for his work, his gentle heart, and his integrity. All of us wish Paul, his lovely bride, Geri and his three sons—Rick, Bill and John—much happiness in the coming years. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, it is only fitting that the House pay tribute to Paul Thompson today.