

April 22, 1999

A TRIBUTE TO PARK SLOPE  
NEIGHBORHOOD FAMILY CENTER

**HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 22, 1999*

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to invite my colleagues to pay tribute to the Park Slope Neighborhood Family Center on the occasion of its Annual Dinner Dance.

This event is not only a festive happening, it is a chance for all of us to celebrate and pay tribute to a group of individuals who embody the spirit of community service. This year's honorees truly represent the best of what our community has to offer.

The Park Slope Neighborhood Family Center (PSNFC) is home to five community organizations serving thousands of south Brooklyn residents. PSNFC was founded in 1983 by a small group of neighborhood residents in response to the need for safe, affordable space shared by local community organizations. By placing a variety of social service programs under one roof, PSNFC encourages the creation of innovative intergovernmental and multicultural programming while answering the interrelated needs of many agency clients.

Martin Gomez serves as the Executive Director of the Brooklyn Public Library, the nation's fifth-largest library system. He is an elected member of the American Library Association Executive Board and a board member of the Metropolitan New York Library Council. He established the Library's first foundation board to raise private funds for library programs and was instrumental in creating an on-line wide-area network providing free public access to the Internet at Brooklyn's 60 public libraries. With a lifelong commitment to encouraging diversity in libraries, Martin has designed programs for the California Literacy Campaign and its Minority Services Recruitment and Scholarship program.

Tupper Thomas serves as the administrator of Prospect Park where she is responsible for the ongoing operation of the park. In addition to overseeing the ongoing restoration of Prospect Park, Tupper Thomas has been instrumental in increasing the park's usership through special events, public information and outreach programs. Tupper Thomas also serves as the president of the Prospect Park Alliance, an organization dedicated to funding activities and services for park visitors, landscape projects, and selected capital projects.

Judith D. Zuk serves as the president and chief executive officer of the Brooklyn Botanic Garden. An horticulturist with experience as an educator, researcher, and administrator, she heads one of America's preeminent public gardens. With members in every State and 52 foreign countries, the Brooklyn Botanic Garden attracts 800,000 visitors annually. She is active in a number of professional and civic organizations and serves as the chairman of the Cultural Institutions Group. Judith also serves on the boards of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, Chase Manhattan Regional

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Advisory Board, Greenwood Cemetery, New York City Street Tree Consortium, and the New York City Water Conservation District.

All of today's honorees have long been known as innovators and beacons of good will to all those with whom they come into contact. Through their dedicated efforts, they have each helped to improve my constituents' quality of life. In recognition of their many accomplishments on behalf of my constituents, I offer my congratulations on their being honored by the Park Slope Neighborhood Family Center.

PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION SERVICES IN INTEGRITY ACT OF 1999

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 22, 1999*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I are proud to introduce the "Partial Hospitalization Services Integrity Act of 1999" that will enact much-needed reforms to Medicare's partial hospitalization benefit.

Partial hospitalization is an important component of Medicare. In-patient hospitalization for psychiatric treatment is expensive and disruptive to the person's life. Therefore, Congress created partial hospitalization as a cost-effective alternative for treating seniors with acute psychological disorders. The program allows them to live at home and receive intensive treatment.

Unfortunately, many dishonest individuals have abused the partial hospitalization program and defrauded the government of millions of dollars. On October 5, 1998, the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General issued a report that exposed egregious waste, fraud, and abuse by many partial hospitalization providers. The report quickly gained national attention. Later that evening, NBC News featured the report in their "Fleecing of America" segment.

The results of that audit represent a clear case of greed and fraud committed by dishonest mental health care providers. For example, the total program costs increased by approximately 482 percent between 1993 and 1997, from \$15 to \$349 million per year! More distressing is the fact that much of this was squandered on unreasonable and unnecessary services, given to people who were not eligible, and provided by organization that were not certified to provide the services.

The bill that I am introducing will correct the conditions that lead to the abuse of the program. The Partial Hospitalization Services Integrity Act of 1999 clarifies the current definition of the organizations that can provide partial hospitalization services and includes clear civil monetary penalties for fraudulent claims. The legislation represents a broad consensus of interested parties that include the Administration, representatives of qualified partial hospitalization providers, and patient advocates.

It is time to act quickly and decisively to preserve a valuable service and to stop the

waste, fraud, and abuse perpetrated by unscrupulous operators.

HONORING ALL THE PEOPLE WHO  
OFFERED ASSISTANCE DURING  
THE AMTRAK TRAIN TRAGEDY  
IN BOURBONNAIS

**HON. JERRY WELLER**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, April 22, 1999*

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Kankakee County Sheriff Tim Bukowski; Bourbonnais Mayor, Grover Brooks; Bourbonnais Police Chief, Joseph Beard, Bourbonnais Fire Chief, Mike Harshbarger; employees of Riverside Medical Center; employees of Provena St. Mary's Hospital; paid and volunteer firefighters and emergency personnel; employees of Birmingham Steel; employees of Farm & Fleet; all policemen and firemen in Kankakee County; as well as all those who reside in the Kankakee River Valley for their acts of heroism during the recent Amtrak train tragedy in Bourbonnais.

The Village of Bourbonnais is known as the "Village of Friendship". The Village as well as the entire Kankakee River Valley has proven worthy of the title. Both local and national news accounts were filled with stories of heroism and acts of kindness. The world was watching and Bourbonnais arose to the occasion. People of all ages rose to the occasion. Half a million pennies collected by Kankakee County school children during the past year even helped save lives. The pennies were recently used to purchase a night vision camera which was used to help see in the night through the fumes and smoke from the wreckage.

I have been told of small acts of kindness throughout the Kankakee River Valley. Anyone who took part in the rescue effort would not be allowed to pay for their own meals in any area restaurant. Food, clothing, and toy donations poured into the local hospitals for over 8 hours. Offers of assistance came from all surrounding communities and counties. Even local teenagers donated blood to the Red Cross.

The Village of Bourbonnais was incorporated in 1875, nearly two centuries after French explorer Cavalier de La Salle established contact with the Potawatomi Indians who lived there. According to Village history, the town takes its name for an early pioneer, Francois Bourbonnais, Sr., a French-Canadian Fur trapper who set up a trading post in 1830. Today, Bourbonnais is a growing community and was named by Reader's Digest as one of the best communities in the United States in which to raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this body to identify and recognize other towns and villages in their own districts whose actions have so greatly proven to be a community which works together during both good and bad times.

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