

April 22, 1999

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY NATIONAL
HISTORICAL PARK ACT OF 1999

HON. MARION BERRY

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Mississippi Valley National Historical Park Act of 1999. This legislation will establish a Historical Park on the former Eaker Air Force Base in Blytheville, Arkansas.

The former Eaker Air Force Base, which is located just outside of Blytheville in the Mississippi Valley region, is the site of 14 archaeological sites associated with Native Americans. The central and lower Mississippi Valley region contained the highest population levels and the most complex Native American societies north of Mexico before the arrival of European peoples in the 16th century. It has also hosted Spanish, French, English, and ultimately American societies at different times in the last 450 years.

Because of its value in illustrating and interpreting the heritage of the United States, these sites have been recognized by the National Park Service in numerous ways, such as designation as being placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1984, and as a National Historic Landmark in 1996.

Archaeological sites such as these benefit, educate, and inspire present and future generations of Americans, but no unified heritage park for the central Mississippi Valley region exists within the National Park Service. This legislation will protect the archaeological sites located on the former Eaker Air Force Base, and preserve, maintain, and interpret the natural, seismic, cultural, and recreational heritage of the central Mississippi Valley region.

A TRIBUTE TO ARLO PETERSON

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to recognize the important achievements of Arlo Peterson, a Minnesotan who was a pioneer and visionary leader in bringing affordable energy and electricity to thousands of rural and later suburban Minnesota residents. Arlo is retiring from his position on the board of Connexus Energy after 34 years of service to his state. Arlo served 25 of those years as Chairman of the Board of Directors. He took on this leadership position for one of the country's leading electric cooperatives upon the death of his father Ed Peterson in 1964, who had been a board member for 17 years. Together, these two men gave their state more than a century of service to help bring affordable electricity to their fellow residents.

A farmer from the small town of St. Francis, Minnesota, Arlo has been a model of stewardship for rural cooperative growth, ensuring that Minnesotans in his vast service area would have the energy and electricity they needed at rates they could afford. He has embodied a spirit of dedication and commitment to service

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

for more than 34 years. Arlo took time from his primary endeavor as a family farmer to improve the lives of others in his own and neighboring communities, and helped to provide a national model of a successful electric cooperative. We are grateful for his tremendous contributions.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CROP INSURANCE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Crop Insurance Improvement Act of 1999. I am honored to have Representative THUNE, Representative MINGE, and Representative BOSWELL joining me as original cosponsors of this comprehensive crop insurance reform proposal.

The basis for this legislation is quite simple. Frankly, the current federal crop insurance program is broken and needs serious repair. Too many of our nation's farmers—especially in North Dakota—have suffered from severe weather disasters in recent years only to fall victim to a federal crop insurance program that does not protect them adequately. With so many producers being driven off the land because of uncontrolled circumstances caused by Mother Nature, the federal government must act quickly and thoroughly in enacting comprehensive crop insurance to allow our nation's farmers the opportunity to manage their risk. However, I caution that even though crop insurance reform is desperately needed, it is only the first step in reforming a safety net in American agriculture.

The Crop Insurance Improvement Act of 1999 reforms the current program by encouraging the broadest possible participation of producers in the program and to ensure greater affordability of the program for producers. It reforms the current program by increasing the subsidy levels to encourage higher participation at the buy-up coverage levels, alleviating the impact of natural disasters on producers' actual production history (APH), assigning 100 percent transitional yields (T-yield) for the newly acquired acreage and new crops, creates cost of production, rating methodologies, and livestock revenue insurance pilot projects, and restructuring the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) Board of Directors to better represent producers' interests.

During the 106th Congress, I am hopeful that the crop insurance reform will occur. Both Congress and the Administration, have made crop insurance their number one priority in agriculture. In fact, Secretary Glickman coined 1999 as the "year of the safety net." I look forward to working in a bipartisan manner with my colleagues in Congress to pass a comprehensive crop insurance reform bill. The Crop Insurance Improvement Act of 1999 is a step in that direction.

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THE EDUCATIONAL
OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 1999

HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 22, 1999

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, it is for our impoverished urban communities that I am introducing the Educational Opportunities Act of 1999. This bill will empower low-income parents living in poverty-stricken areas to provide the best education possible for their children.

I am honored to introduce this education plan for our urban communities, which is embraced and co-authored by the Congressional Renewal Alliance. The Renewal Alliance is a coalition of representatives and senators committed to working with community leaders to find legislative proposals which facilitate local solutions in impoverished regions. This will lead to individual empowerment.

I have worked closely with my colleagues in the Renewal Alliance to craft a bill that provides educational alternatives in our inner cities, and provides relief for those parents who invest in their children.

The Educational Opportunities Act of 1999 adopts the principles of another bill I have introduced, H.R. 600, which provides up to a \$1,000 per-child tax credit for educational expenses. In the Educational Opportunities Act of 1999, this tax credit is extended to parents in Enterprise Zones and Enterprise Communities to cover the cost of textbooks, tuition, tutors, computer software, and other needs that will increase a child's learning opportunities. Thanks to the education tax credit included in this bill, low income parents will have far more resources to educate their children from kindergarten through high school.

Another important component of this bill grants Opportunity Scholarships to children of the most needy parents. Under this Opportunity Scholarship Program, states and localities would be able to use existing federal funds to run a low-income public and private school choice program. Scholarships would be directed to students whose families are at or below 185 percent of the poverty rate. The scholarships would be used to cover the cost of tuition at any public or private school located in an Enterprise Zone or Enterprise Community. At least \$310 million will be used for this scholarship program.

It is time to give children in the poorest communities a meaningful chance to learn and excel. Bureaucrats in Washington cannot meet this need; those who make a real difference in the lives of these kids are parents and local community leaders. With the Educational Opportunities Act of 1999, we will provide poor parents the resources and choices to educate their children. Furthermore, we will liberate low-income communities to create schools where children have a true chance to learn and rise up from their challenges before them.

I urge all Members who are interested in lifting children up from poverty to join me in supporting the Educational Opportunities Act of 1999.