

The Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers, an international coalition of car and light truck manufacturers, was formed this past January. The member companies include BMW, DaimlerChrysler, Fiat, Ford, General Motors, Mazda Nissan, Toyota, Volkswagen, and Volvo. The new trade association created by this powerful Alliance of automobile manufacturers promises to be an organization that is nimble enough to respond to rapidly changing issues that reach across the ever-shrinking global marketplace.

Members of the Alliance have gone on the public record as committed to developing constructive approaches. Moreover, the Alliance pledges to work with government and other stakeholders to find sensible and effective solutions to shared concerns. We have already witnessed this constructive approach to issues. On May 1, President Clinton unveiled EPA's proposed "Tier 2" standards to reduce vehicle emissions and sulfur content in fuel. Prior to this announcement, the Alliance had called for reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions and sulfur-free fuel to provide cleaner cars and cleaner air. EPA's proposal and the Alliance are similar. The Alliance generally supports the clean air targets that EPA has proposed, including cars and trucks meeting the same average standards for nitrogen oxides.

The Alliance companies operate 255 manufacturing facilities in 33 states. They produce more than 90% of all new vehicles sold each year in the United States.

The Alliance stands ready to provide its views and comments on automotive concerns to Members of Congress as we debate issues of importance to the industry and consumers. It has a dedicated staff of professionals, led by Josephine Cooper, who have a long record of experience and knowledge of automobile issues.

A key component to developing good public policy is having an open dialogue with groups impacted by our decisions. We are confident that the Alliance and its member companies will play a vital role in developing creative and constructive solutions to the issues before the Congress.

IN HONOR OF THE GENESIS CLUB
AND THE VISIT OF MRS.
ROSALYNN CARTER

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to The Genesis Club of Worcester, Massachusetts and note the visit on May 19, 1999, of former First Lady Rosalynn Carter to the club.

The Genesis Club was founded in 1988 by a small group of local business leaders and professionals whose family members were struggling with mental illness. Since its founding, The Genesis Club has developed a comprehensive model of support and rehabilitation in which participants are not patients or clients, but members who participate fully in management, employment, and therapeutic

services and programs. The Genesis Club works to encourage and empower individuals with mental illness to function and maintain independence in their living, working, and social environments. Since its founding ten years ago, The Genesis Club has helped more than 800 individuals cope with mental illness through its supportive atmosphere, which fosters vocational and social development, embraces individuals, and leads to personally satisfying and socially productive lives. I and my fellow residents of Worcester and the Third Congressional District of Massachusetts are understandably proud of The Genesis Club, their programs, and their accomplishments.

On May 19, 1999, The Genesis Club will warmly welcome former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who, throughout her public service career, has been a driving force in the field of mental health. It was while Mrs. Carter was serving as active honorary chair of the President's Commission on Mental Health during the Carter Administration that the Mental Health System Act of 1980 was passed. In addition, in 1982, President and Mrs. Carter founded the Carter Institute, which strives to relieve suffering in our country and around the world by focusing on the cause and consequences of war, hunger, poverty, and human rights abuses. I thank Mrs. Carter for the support and encouragement her visit will bring to The Genesis Club.

Therefore, I rise today both in tribute of The Genesis Club of Worcester, Massachusetts, and their efforts on behalf of those suffering from mental illness, and former First Lady Rosalynn Carter, who, by her visit, honors both my district and The Genesis Club.

MEDICARE REHABILITATION BENEFIT IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise along with my colleagues FRANK PALLONE, JIM MCCRERY, and RICHARD BURR, to introduce the Medicare Rehabilitation Benefit Improvement Act of 1999. This legislation is an urgently needed, common sense approach that will help repair a damaging provision passed by Congress nearly two years ago.

In recent years, cost pressures on the Medicare program have resulted in Congress imposing \$115 billion in cuts on the Medicare program through the Balanced Budget Act of 1997. As a result, we have seen sharp reductions in payments for the elderly's care. Some of these cuts can be absorbed by our health care system. Others, however, cannot, and are having a devastating impact on the quality of patient care being delivered to the most frail, sickest Medicare beneficiaries. The Congressional Budget Office has just reported that actual BBA cuts to Medicare will exceed by billions of dollars what Congress intended for the five years from 1998 through 2002. It is time to look at what Congress actually did, and where appropriate, make necessary changes.

BBA imposed annual \$1,500 caps on Part B outpatient rehabilitative services—one for

physical therapy and speech-language pathology, and one for occupational therapy—provided outside the hospital setting. In practice, these limits ignore a patient's clinical requirements and restrict care for those who suffer from the most debilitating diseases, such as stroke, hip fracture, or ALS, and those who incur multiple injuries in a given year. And because the caps are not adjusted for cost variations across the nation, they disproportionately harm beneficiaries in high cost areas. Finally, because the new consolidated billing rules imposed by BBA require all filing for patients in skilled nursing facilities to be done by the facility itself, those facilities that provide adequate therapy services to their sickest patients feel the brunt of the payment limits.

When BBA was being written and debated, Congress held no hearings to examine what the impact of these arbitrary limits might be on patient care. The caps were a crude budget cutting measure designed to deliver savings—\$1.7 billion over five years. And in that regard, they were successful. The therapy caps were implemented on January 1, 1999. Since that time, I have heard that in my district, some Medicare beneficiaries in SNFs have already exceeded their limit. Some estimates indicate that one of every six beneficiaries who receive rehabilitative care outside a hospital setting will need in excess of \$1,500 in services in a given year. The Health Care Financing Administration's own words in the regulation implementing the cap, from the Federal Register of November 2, 1998, illustrate the problem:

The \$1,500 limits will reduce the amount of therapy services paid for by Medicare. The patients most affected are likely to be those with diagnoses such as stroke, certain fractures, and amputation, where the number of therapy visits needed by a patient may exceed those that can be reimbursed by Medicare under the statutory limits. Services not paid for by Medicare, however may be paid for by other payers.

But what about Medicare enrollees who cannot afford high-priced supplemental insurance policies to cover the balances? Clearly, some relief is necessary so that all patients with serious conditions have access to adequate therapy services and the opportunity to resume normal activities of daily living.

In the last Congress, I introduced bipartisan legislation that would eliminate the arbitrary therapy cap and instead pay for outpatient rehabilitative services based on the patient's diagnosis. But Congress adjourned without holding hearings on that bill. This year, we are beginning to witness the consequences of our failure to act. So today, I am pleased to join my colleagues in sponsoring the "Medicare Rehabilitation Benefit Improvement Act," which is specifically designed to provide relief to beneficiaries who need greater levels of care. This bill creates limited exceptions to the \$1,500 cap so that those patients who need additional care the most will be able to continue to receive it. The bill also requires the Secretary of HHS to study the impact of this legislation on beneficiaries and to develop alternatives to the \$1,500 limits. This will help Congress determine if the caps for rehabilitative therapy services should continue.

This legislation is a common sense approach that will permit Medicare patients who need intensive therapy services to secure the

appropriate level of care for their conditions. It has the strong endorsement of several organizations, including the American Health Care Association, the American Occupational Therapy Association, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, the National Association of Rehabilitation Agencies, and the Private Practice Section of the American Physical Therapy Association. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this essential measure to restore adequate therapy outpatient rehabilitative coverage to those beneficiaries most in need.

REGARDING BLACK ORIGINAL
INDIVIDUALS

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in a time where our young African-American males are depicted in the news as at-risk youth, criminals, drug dealers, and high school dropouts, we forget that there are positive young men among them who are changing their environment for the better. As a matter-of-fact, many young African-American males are succeeding in our society and are making their communities both proud and strong.

Mr. Speaker, it is with tremendous pride that I rise to pay tribute to eight young African-American gentlemen in my district who are using their energy, talent, and intelligence to serve others in their community. I truly believe that their accomplishments have cut through the dark and gloomy media depictions of African-American males.

Mr. John Kemp, Mr. Brandon Collier, Mr. Clayton Redmon, Mr. William Hudson, Mr. B.J. Armstrong, Mr. Rodrick Coaxum, Mr. Zandrian Harp, and Mr. Andre Griffin are all members of "Black Original Individuals." Better known as BOI, they formed this organization from a part of an entertainment group already established called Dream Entertainment.

BOI has been designed by these young men to take the social and financial benefits of hosting parties and turn them into a business practice that serves them and their community in a positive manner. Besides teaching them successful business skills, their operation is a great example of teamwork, strategic planning, communications skills, and volunteerism. I am confident that these young men will continue to apply these lessons throughout their lives.

Mr. Speaker, what is particularly notable of their work is that they have been using the profits to fund future enterprises and use the rest of the money to set up a scholarship fund that will be open on a community-wide basis for minorities. This is a great example of humble and positive individuals giving back to others.

Mr. Speaker, not too long ago some high school students in my area had an experience contrary to the gentlemen I cite today. During the fall, hundreds of students disrupted parts of the Dallas area with dangerous underage drinking, noise violations, littering and basic disrespect for our community.

I would like people to focus on these gentlemen as a contrast to the youth that I just mentioned. Instead of destructive parties, BOI has controlled and safe settings where fun is the focus. Instead of violating the law, BOI works within the parameters of rules. Instead of littering our community with beer cans and spreading bottles across lawns, BOI is spreading a message of positive change and service throughout our community.

Mr. Speaker, some of these young men, Mr. Collier and Mr. Redmon in particular, will be heading to college. As they prepare to write what I am sure will be another successful chapter in their lives, they are also passing down their business lessons to the youngest of their members. I commend Mr. Collier and Mr. Redmon for teaching the young for the benefit and sustenance of the group as a whole. Quite often we hear about the successful, both young and old, forgetting to pass their lessons and experiences to those who will come after them. I am pleased that this is not the case with the members of BOI.

On behalf of the constituents of the 30th congressional district, I thank BOI for their service to our community and wish them continued success.

REPORT FROM PENNSYLVANIA
HONORING SCHNECKSVILLE
COMMUNITY FIRE COMPANY

HON. PATRICK J. TOOMEY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 18, 1999

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver my Report from Pennsylvania. Today, I would like to share with my colleagues and the American people the remarkable efforts of individuals in Schnecksville, Pennsylvania.

All across the Lehigh Valley, my wife, Kris, and I meet so many wonderful people. We learn of and hear about amazing individuals who strive day and night to make our communities better places to live.

I like to call these individuals Lehigh Valley Heroes. Lehigh Valley Heroes make a difference by helping their friends and neighbors.

Mr. Speaker, everyone involved with the Schnecksville Community Fire Company are Lehigh Valley Heroes.

This weekend, the Schnecksville Fire Company will celebrate 75 years of service to their community. For this reason, I would like to commend and applaud their efforts—both past and present—in making our community a better place.

Mr. Speaker, this concludes my Report from Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, I insert the following for printing in the RECORD:

THE 1998 SCHNECKSVILLE FIRE TEAM

Richard Ruch, Keith Fenstermacher, Asst. Engineer; Steve Fetherolf, Lieut.; Todd Kern, Asst. Chief; Keith Zehner, Asst. Chief; Jason Zellner, Ronald Paulus, Scott Gicking, Rev. Michael Bodnyk, Chaplain; Ronald Dunstan, Engineer; Tim Henry, Marvin Belles, Nelson Fogle, Lieut.; Tom Hourt, Captain; Ronald Stahley, Chief; Keith Stahley, Charles Weidaw, Daniel Wehr, Jody Blose, Brad Petrahoy.

FIRE POLICE

Nelson Fogle, Karl Haas, Fire Police Captain; Roy Kern, Fire Police Lieut.; Glenn Stahley, Ronald Paulus, Robert Bold, Dennis Oels

NORTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP RESCUE SQUAD

Ron Rutt, Rescue Lieut.; Tom Hourt, Rescue Lieut.; Ronald Stahley, Rescue Capt.; Steve Fetherolf, Scott Gicking, Ronald Paulus, Richard Ruch, Marvin Belles, Keith Fenstermacher, Charles Weidaw, Charles Eckhart, Todd Kern, Nelson Fogle, Keith Zehner, Daniel Wehr, Robert Rudelitch, Gary Cederberg, Jamie Ebert, Mark Kaintz, Kenny Reimert, Jim Steward, Gary Frederick.

75TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE

George Wessner, Harold Ruch, Rose Bobin, Eleanor Kressley, Carol Wessner, Faye Ruch, John Schaeffer, Delores Wehr, Jean Horwith, Betty Moll, Ron Niderostek, Bernie Molchany, Eva Feinour, Sandy Bradley, Marie Bittner, Betty Holler, Nancy Kern, Roy Kern, Wayne Moll, Nelson Fogle, Terry Dunbar, Ellsworth Meckel, Dennis Bittner, Richard Solt, Kathy Ruch, Richard Ruch, Diane Fries, Eleanor Stettler, June Handwerk.

OFFICERS 1924 TO 1998

PRESIDENTS' NAMES AND YEARS SERVED

J. Eric Linde, 1924-1941.
Victor Haas, 1942-1945.
David Klotz, 1946.
Raymond Baer, 1947-1948, 1950-1951.
Warren Rohrback, 1949.
Mosby Heinly, 1952.
Ellsworth Meckel, 1953, 1967-1972, 1982.
Robert Heinly, 1954.
Carl Correll, 1955.
Wayne Moyer, 1956-1957.
Donald Hersh, 1958.
Paul Schneck, 1959.
John J. Meckel, 1960.
Russel Grim, 1961-66.
Gordon Werley, 1973-75.
Ted Rothrock, 1976-1978, 1980-1981, 1983-1986, 1997-1999.
John Schaeffer, 1979, 1988-1989.
Karl Haas, 1987.
Robert Gibiser, 1990-1994.
John Ruch, 1995-1996.

VICE PRESIDENTS' NAMES AND YEARS SERVED

Stanley Peters, 1924.
William Long, 1924.
M.D. Wehr, 1924-1926.
Asa M. Stopp, 1924-1925.
Wilson Shankweiler, 1924.
William Heiney, 1925-1932, 1951.
Guy Kohler, 1925-1944.
Wilson Schuler, 1925, 1927-1945.
Steward Peters, 1926.
Preston Holben, 1926.
William Peters, 1927-1941.
Homer Frey, 1927-1928.
John Henninger, 1928-1932.
Howard Heinly, 1929-1932.
Walter E. Bittner, 1933-1942.
Malcolm Hummel, 1942.
Donald Best, 1942-1943.
Richard Reitz, 1942.
Ellsworth Meckel, 1943, 1954, 1956, 1958, 1975-1981.
Theodore Rau, 1943.
David Klotz, 1944-1948.
Raymond Baer, 1944-1945, 1948-1949.
Wm. J.D. Heintzelman, 1945.
Fred Dotterer, 1945.
Franklyn Bittner, 1945.
Walter Best, 1946-1950.
Victor Haas, 1946.
Wilmer Stahley, 1946.
Willis Smoyer, 1947-1950.
Warren Rohrback, 1948, 1957.