

IN HONOR OF JOHN HAMILTON, FINANCIAL SERVICES ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR, VICE PRESIDENT, BAY STATE SAVINGS BANK

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Mr. John Hamilton, Vice President of the Bay State Savings Bank in my hometown of Worcester, MA. On May 20, 1999, he will be honored by the Small Business Administration as the Financial Services Advocate of the Year.

As a leader, Mr. Hamilton plays a significant role in the bank's strategic planning by supervising commercial, residential and consumer lending. He personifies the "ideal" small business advocate, combining extraordinary technical and underwriting skills with a high level of creative thinking in accessing funding programs. This results in successful small business lending, particularly to the minority-owned businesses in the Worcester Community and the Central Massachusetts Region.

His multi-million dollar portfolio of loans to small businesses reflects his efforts and advocacy on behalf of small business throughout many of the communities which I represent. Mr. Hamilton is active in Centro Las Americas, Worcester's leading Latino Community Based organization, the Worcester Minority Business Council, the Worcester Banking Council Loan Committee, and the Worcester Chamber of Commerce.

Thus Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Hamilton and his efforts to lend a helping hand and for his contributions to the economic well-being of the community.

RECOGNITION OF ANTELOPE VALLEY HOSPITAL FOR THEIR AHA AWARD

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, this week is National Hospital Week. It is a time when communities across the country celebrate the people that make hospitals the special places they are. The theme for this year's commemoration sums it up nicely: "People Care. Miracles Happen." It recognizes the health care workers, volunteers and other health professionals who are there 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, curing and caring, for their neighbors who need them.

An example of this dedication is the Sexual Assault Response Service of Antelope Valley Hospital in Lancaster, CA—which is in my district. This wonderful program won the American Hospital Association's prestigious Hospital Award for Volunteer Excellence, which highlights special contributions of hospital volunteers.

The Sexual Assault Response Service is a team of hospital volunteers that frees up hospital staff for other duties by offering special-

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ized assistance to sexual assault victims, families, hospital personnel and law enforcement agencies. To meet the program's high standards, volunteers get more than 60 hours of training.

Responding to a call from any area hospital emergency department, they provide support to victims while helping solicit histories, preparing evidence collection kits, assisting with medical and legal examinations, and overseeing the completion of state forms. Volunteers work with the district attorney's office throughout the court process and offer one-on-one counseling, a referral service, a lending library and community education.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize Antelope Valley for this outstanding program and congratulate them for this prestigious award.

LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO DESIGNATE WILSON CREEK AS A WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

HON. CASS BALLENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation, that when enacted, would designate Wilson Creek, in my district, as a Wild and Scenic River.

Wilson Creek is a free flowing creek which passes through some of the most beautiful scenery in the nation. It is home to a multitude of fish species, plant life and serves as a habitat for thousands of animals which live along its banks. From its headwaters below Calloway Peak on Grandfather Mountain in Avery County, North Carolina to where it empties into Johns River in Caldwell County, Wilson Creek meets or exceeds all the requirements for such an important designation.

Specifically, my bill would designate 23.3 miles of Wilson Creek as a Wild and Scenic River. In my opinion, having Wilson Creek designated as Wild and Scenic would help maintain the natural beauty of the creek while helping to improve the quality of recreational opportunities, like hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing and other activities for the thousands of people who would visit each year.

The potential designation of Wilson Creek as a Wild and Scenic River has received tremendous support from the County Commissions from Avery and Caldwell County as well as local residents. In fact, when I met with the county commissioners of Caldwell County last month, I was presented with letters of support from local residents, positive newspaper articles and editorials, and a letter from the U.S. Forest Service which indicated a willingness to help us in this effort. I am convinced that the designation of Wilson Creek is well supported within the communities which surround it.

I believe that this is an excellent bill that would do much to preserve Wilson Creek, turning it into both a natural asset and a national treasure. I urge its immediate consideration and enactment.

May 11, 1999

RECOGNIZING MIDDLETOWN REGIONAL HOSPITAL'S INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAM

HON. JOHN A. BOEHNER

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 11, 1999

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of National Hospital Week and to bring special attention to Middletown Regional Hospital in Middletown, Ohio. Middletown has been awarded the American Hospital Association's prestigious 1999 NOVA Award, which recognizes innovative programs that respond to community needs.

Middletown Regional Hospital is a 310-bed facility which is sole provider of Middletown's hospital services. In 1996, an alarming trend came to light: Middletown's readmission rate had quadrupled in just two years from 1.5 percent to 6.2 percent. Rather than ignoring the rate increase and simply collecting the additional revenues which accompany higher readmission rates, the hospital administration set out to determine the root causes of the problem and determine what, if anything, the hospital and its staff could do to lower rates. After discussions with community members and health care stakeholders, as well as a thorough review of the relevant data and literature, the folks at Middletown Regional Hospital determined that many patients lacked the financial resources and the general knowledge to properly care for themselves after discharge and as a result were using the emergency room as their primary source of medical care.

In an effort to stem the increasing readmissions, Middletown Regional Hospital implemented its "Making a Case for Community Health" program which is the focus of the NOVA award. Here's how the program works: a registered nurse, such as Deborah Tibbs, is designated as a case manager for as many as 40 chronically ill patients who have a history of high emergency room use. Patients are referred to the program by a variety of sources and enrolled regardless of whether their care is provided through Medicaid, private insurance, or even if they have no insurance at all. Deborah spends her time visiting with patients and educating them on how to "manage" their illness independently. She advises them on their lifestyle habits, answers their medication questions, and is only a phone call away 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide advice when one of her patients is having troubles. Deborah's services are provided free of charge to the patient.

The results have been dramatic. Hospital admissions for program participants have dropped by more than 50 percent, the average length of stay when they are admitted is down by more than one full day and, as a result, \$1.5 million less was spent on the care of these patients.

The "Making a Case for Community Health" program is a grand success because the hospital stepped up when they saw a community need and committed significant financial resources. The result has been better quality care and lower health care costs. I applaud their efforts and hope other communities will follow their lead.