

audit concluded that the FEC is "a competently managed organization with a skilled and motivated staff" that executes its responsibilities "without partisan bias." The audit also found that "high ethical standards are espoused throughout the organization."

However, PricewaterhouseCoopers did recommend several common-sense actions that would improve the FEC's performance. "The FEC's continued success will require that the agency aggressively pursue both incremental and significant changes in organization, work process, technology, and management practice," the report said.

Several of these recommendations have since been formally endorsed by a majority of the FEC commissioners, making them truly bipartisan in nature. In addition, the FEC commissioners have themselves delivered to Congress a list of bipartisan recommendations, not explicitly included in the audit, that would help the agency do its job better.

Mr. Speaker, this bill incorporates 29 recommendations that were either included in the audit and endorsed by the FEC, or were supported by a bipartisan majority of the FEC commission members. Together they will improve the efficiency and productivity of the FEC.

Most of the recommendations included in this bill address such diverse areas as filing deadlines for campaign reports, eligibility rules for presidential campaign public financing, and FEC administrative procedures. Other can be regarded as more thorough campaign reform, like Section 201, which prohibits foreign nationals, who are now prohibited from making hard money contributions, from making soft money contributions as well.

Each of these technical changes would fine-tune current FEC practices and clarify inconsistencies in current law that have confused FEC officials, contributors, and candidates alike who have had every intention of fairly obeying the law, but have not always been sure just what that law is. I firmly believe that when the underlying statutes are clear to all affected parties, administering and enforcing the law becomes a much more efficient, inexpensive, and straight-forward process.

Mr. Speaker, I do, however, want to spotlight one of the centerpieces of my bill, electronic filing, which was the main audit recommendation and one of the first recommendations that all six FEC commissioners endorsed soon after the audit was released.

Section 101 of this bill instructs the FEC to develop a comprehensive, mandatory electronic data filing system for the major filers. Mandatory electronic filing has been discussed for several years now. Unfortunately, no compelling case has been made for it. After studying the audit and hearing from the FEC, I am convinced that mandatory electronic filing is one of the most important changes we can make. Not only would electronic filing speed up the time it takes for campaign financial reports to be posted on the Web and made available to the public, it would also set off a chain reaction that would allow FEC auditors to analyze campaign reports much more quickly than they presently can. This in turn would allow them to forward much more quickly to the FEC General Counsel's office alleged violations of the law, giving the General Coun-

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sel more time to investigate cases before they go stale. In recent years, my Republican colleagues have sharply criticized the General Counsel's office for its slow pace and tendency to dismiss too many cases. Electronic filing will provide the FEC with the tools necessary to expedite its business.

While it is important to look for cost-effective ways to make the FEC more efficient, it is also crucial that the agency be given the funds needed to thoroughly conduct their business. This bill would authorize the FEC budget at \$38,516,000 which is identical to the President's budget request. This is \$2 million more than the FEC's FY99 budget, a 5 percent increase.

Let me conclude by saying that Congress has not passed an FEC authorization bill in 19 years. There are many reasons for this, chiefly an absence of a coherent blueprint that both parties could accept. I regard the independent audit, and this legislation which I am introducing today, as that blueprint for bipartisan action and urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

IN HONOR OF MICHAEL LEGGIERO:
NORTH HUDSON KIWANIS CLUB
MAN OF THE YEAR

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 14, 1999

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Michael Leggiero for being named North Hudson Kiwanis Club Man of The Year. Mr. Leggiero's leadership has shaped the North Hudson Community Action Corporation (NHCAC) into an agency which provides health care, housing and/or child care for over 41,000 residents of North and West Hudson County.

In 1993, the NHCAC created their state-of-the-art Community Health Center which provides primary health care for thousands of underinsured and uninsured Hudson County residents. The Center provides services such as prenatal, women's, pediatric and adult care for over 400 patients a week.

In 1996, Michael Leggiero led NHCAC in the critical effort to build affordable housing in Hudson County. The joint venture he spearheaded led to the construction of 49 new affordable housing units and NHCAC now has plans to begin a second development project.

In their latest venture the NHCAC has collaborated with the town of West New York to create the Children First Infant and Toddler Childcare Center. This innovative child care center is located in one of West New York's housing developments.

Michael Leggiero has been a recipient of many awards and citations including: the Jersey City State College Business Leadership Award, the VFW Patriotic Service Award, and citations by both the New Jersey State Assembly and State Senate.

Again, I congratulate Michael Leggiero on being named North Hudson Kiwanis Club Man of The Year. Because of his leadership and tremendous service to Hudson County, I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this honor.

May 14, 1999

IN HONOR OF THE KIWANIS CLUB
OF ASTORIA/LONG ISLAND CITY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 14, 1999

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Kiwanis Club of Astoria/Long Island City and its honorees for this year: Roseanne and Tom Alafogiannis and Theresa and Jack Brucculeri.

The Kiwanis Club of Astoria/Long Island City was established 11 years ago with a primary emphasis on the community's youth. The Club's motto is "Children Priority I." This organization not only says it cares about children, it proves it.

The Club's projects include: college scholarships for high school seniors; an anti-graffiti program; support for the "Bring up Grades" program in the local elementary schools; sponsorship of the "Safe Haven" program for children who get lost or need assistance on the street; Thanksgiving turkey donations for the needy; and support of local groups such as Goliard Concerts and the Queens Autistic Children's Society.

On May 7, 1999, at its second annual dinner dance, the Kiwanis Club of Astoria/Long Island City will honor two couples who exemplify the heart and soul of the Kiwanis organization: Roseanne and Thom Alafogiannis and Theresa and Jack Brucculeri.

Thom Alafogiannis was born in Greece and followed his dream by immigrating to the United States. Thirty-five years ago he moved to Astoria, Queens, where he founded Alafogiannis Plumbing and Heating. He is also the president of the Greek American Homeowners Association and a member of the Board of Directors of the AHEPA (America Hellenic Educational Progressive Association) Hermes Chapter.

Roseanne and Tom has been married for 30 years and have four children: Paul, Jennie, Joe and Billy. Roseanne is the corresponding secretary of the Greek American Homeowners Association and a vital community worker.

Both Tom and Roseanne are active in other groups and fraternal organizations in Astoria.

Jack Brucculeri came to Astoria at the age of eight from Italy and has lived there since. Theresa moved to Astoria 24 years ago. They have two daughters. Jack, an entrepreneur and businessman, owns the JICC Industries Construction Company, the Pizza Palace and Portofino Restaurant. Along with Rocco Sacamore, he also owns the Trattoria L'Incontro in Astoria.

Jack has been a member of the Astoria Kiwanis Club since 1982 and has served as president of the Club. He is a member of the Italian American Club, the Forum Club, and Ditmars Restoration. Theresa has been a member of the Kiwanis since 1988 and she also serves as a Board of Directors member of the Ronald McDonald House. Both are also active in other groups and fraternal organizations.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to ask my colleagues to rise in tribute to this outstanding organization and their honorees. They truly represent the best of community spirit and values.