

being the longest serving African American female to serve in the House of Representatives.

In 1991, she wrote the law which extends Medicare Coverage for mammography screening, thereby, allowing millions of elderly and disabled women to receive this vital service. She was successful in praising legislation which expanded Medicaid coverage for pap smears in order to better provide for the early detection of cervical uterine cancers.

In 1979, Congresswoman Collins served as Chairperson for the Congressional Black Caucus and was the first African American woman to serve as a Democratic Whip at-large.

The second postal facility is named after Otis Grant Collins, who prior to his death in 1992, was recognized as one of the premier activists in apprenticeship training in this country. In addition, while serving as a State Representative in the Illinois General Assembly he was a champion of laws that protected minority communities from redlining.

The third postal facility is named after Mary Alice "Ma" Henry, who prior to her death in 1995, was recognized as one of Chicago's most caring and compassionate community activists. She is remembered as a courageous leader for the poor, uninsured and left out of our society. In 1976, the Mary Alice "Ma" Henry Family Health Center was dedicated and now serves over 20,000 patients every year.

The fourth postal facility is named after former State Representative Robert LeFlore, Jr. who prior to his death in 1993, was recognized as a leading advocate for the disadvantaged and underprivileged. He was a tireless worker, on behalf of seniors and children and his contributions will be remembered a long time.

These individuals represent the best of Chicago and the nation. Their contributions have been significant and their legacies have been embedded in the communities they touched. Therefore, I am pleased to sponsor this bill on behalf of some of the greatest leaders in the African American community.

INTRODUCTION OF MEDICARE MODERNIZATION NO. 6: MEDICARE PREVENTIVE CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1999

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased today to introduce the sixth bill in my Medicare modernization effort: the "Medicare Preventive Care Improvement Act of 1999." This bill carries forward the overall theme of modernization: to improve the quality of health services for Medicare beneficiaries, and achieve potential savings for the program.

Medicare should provide state-of-the-art health services to its beneficiaries. But in order to achieve this, Medicare needs more flexibility to adapt and change with today's ever-changing health sciences. Currently, Medicare relies on Congressional decision-making for too many of its day-to-day oper-

ations. For example, my colleagues and I have often been asked to consider whether or not to include additional services in Medicare's benefits package. In order to do this, we have to weigh the costs and benefits of highly technical information that we know virtually nothing about. Often, our decisions are based more on political motivations than sound scientific analysis. This is no way to run a health insurance plan.

Fortunately, we have experts in the Department of Health and Human Services who are qualified to make these decisions. Now we just need to give them the authority to do so. The "Medicare Preventive Care Improvement Act of 1999" would allow the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make decisions about whether or not to cover new preventive health measures. If the Secretary determines that covering a new preventive service would be cost effective, she may implement that coverage without seeking an Act of Congress. Granting such administrative flexibility is the cornerstone of my modernization effort.

In 1997, Congress passed a series of preventive health initiatives for Medicare including: Yearly Mammography Screening; Increased coverage of Screening Pap Smear and Pelvic Exams; Prostate Cancer Screening; Colorectal Cancer Screening; Diabetes Self Management and Training Services (and coverage of blood test strips and glucose monitors); and Bone Mass Measurement tests (osteoporosis screening).

Recognizing the importance of preventive health care to the Medicare population, the BBA also provided for a study to analyze the potential expansion or modification of preventive and other services covered under Medicare. Unfortunately, the BBA did not take this commitment to preventive care one step further by allowing the Secretary to implement preventive services that are found to be cost effective. This bill leaves the technical, medical, cost-benefit analysis issues up to the Secretary and the expert doctors in the Department to resolve.

If we want Medicare beneficiaries to avail themselves of preventive services, we must make it simple and affordable for them to do so. This bill also makes two necessary improvements in that regard. Currently, some preventive services are subject to the \$100 Part B deductible while others are specifically exempted from the application of the deductible. The Medicare Preventive Care Improvement Act would standardize the policy so that all preventive benefits are exempt from the deductible. In addition, under current Medicare rules, providers can balance bill for some preventive services, but not others. This legislation would firmly establish in law that balance billing for all preventive services is prohibited.

What type of preventive care services might be allowed under the bill I am introducing today? In recent years, I have received a number of letters and reports from kidney disease specialists saying that if Medicare were more flexible in providing care to those approaching end-stage renal disease, we could in many cases delay the onset of ESRD and the need for dialysis by months or even years.

Each year a person is on dialysis with terminal ESRD, it costs Medicare and the tax-

payer \$40,000 to \$60,000. ESRD patients are consistently the most expensive patients enrolled in the program. Yet experts have said that dietary consultation, occasional dialysis, and early placement of dialysis access, are all tools which can save money, pain, and improve the quality of life of ESRD patients. I do not know if these claims are valid. I am not a doctor. But HHS has the experts, and if the Department's physicians and researchers find these claims are true, of course we should start to cover those preventive services. The Secretary should have the flexibility to provide these services when she finds that the evidence supports their use as cost-saving, quality-improving actions, without requiring an Act of Congress.

Another example of a qualified preventive service is independent living services for the blind. When someone is stricken with blindness, they can access several training programs that help them learn to live independently. Without this training, blind persons risk becoming institutionalized. Until this bill, if the Secretary determines that rehabilitation such as this would prevent a blind person from having to move to a more intensive setting, she may cover such services.

Modern medicine keeps developing new miracles to delay or prevent terrible illnesses. If Medicare is to be a modern health insurance plan, it must be able to cover these preventive care services quickly. Forward looking treatments like those included in the BBA take the position that a disease prevented is a dollar saved. Logically, if we prevent diseases from occurring, Medicare will save money in the long run. In the case of Medicare, the savings can be considerable. The bill I am introducing today gives the Medicare Administrator the tools to use modern health advances to save lives and money.

The BBA of 1997 was a good first step, but did not go far enough toward improving the overall service available to Medicare beneficiaries. The "Medicare Preventive Care Improvement Act of 1999" provides for greater flexibility to adopt preventive health measures without having Members of Congress play doctor.

IN HONOR OF ST. COLUMBKILLE PARISH SCHOOL

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor S. Columbkille Parish School, which has been named a 1999 Blue Ribbon School of Excellence by the U.S. Department of Education.

Only 266 schools in the country earned this prestigious award this year. Blue Ribbon Schools are considered to be models of both excellence and equity where educational excellence for all students is a high priority. St. Columbkille Parish School had to demonstrate its effectiveness in meeting local, state and

national educational goals and had to successfully complete a rigorous application process. Blue Ribbon Schools must offer instructional programs that meet the highest academic standards, have supportive and learning-centered school environments, and demonstrate student outcome results that are significantly above average.

This is a great achievement for the students, parents, teachers and staff. The hard work of the teaching and administrative staff at St. Columbkille Parish School, combined with the outstanding involvement of parents, has created an excellent climate for learning. The entire St. Columbkille Parish School community should be very proud of this national recognition. Its academic programs and environment will serve as a model for schools across the country.

My fellow colleagues, please join me in congratulating the students, teachers and administration of St. Columbkille Parish School for their commitment to excellence.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING  
MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS  
AND COMMENDING IPALCO EN-  
TERPRISES

**HON. JULIA CARSON**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, the end of May brings us to Memorial Day, a time of national remembrance and honor for those who have passed on. Once known as Decoration Day, devoted to the decoration of the graves of veterans of service in the Civil War, in the years between its focus has changed.

I rise to pay a special tribute to a man of vision and the company he leads in Indianapolis, Indiana, for their work this year to bring the Memorial Day tradition back to our minds and our hearts in a new and important way.

Mr. Speaker, downtown Indianapolis is lined with stone memorials to the men and women in uniform who served our nation at war and at peace down through the years. Nearby, a memorial to the men of the USS *Indianapolis* marks their service. On Monument Circle, at the very heart of downtown Indianapolis, stands the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument, standing nearly as tall as the Statue of Liberty, a multifaceted recognition of the contributions of Indiana's Soldiers, Sailors and Marines from the Civil War through the Spanish American War, the Boxer Rebellion and our other foreign military engagements up to World War I.

Across the street, facing the monument, is the corporate headquarters of IPALCO. Looking out upon that memorial are the offices of John Hodowal, President and Chairman of the Board.

For many years, Memorial Day has been associated with a world-famous sporting event—the Indianapolis 500. In our hometown, the arrival of the weekend of the race is celebrated with a major civic event, the 500 Festival Parade, through our city's downtown, passing block after block of those memorials.

Just last June, John Hodowal and his wife Caroline were reading an article in The New

York Times about America's winners of the Congressional Medal of Honor. They learned to their dismay that, since the Civil War, 3400 heroic Americans had earned the honor but that there was no place in America devoted to their remembrance. Then came the glimmer of an idea.

This year, thanks to the civic virtue of John Hodowal, and the civic enterprise of the corporation he leads, IPALCO Enterprises and the IPALCO Enterprises Foundation, something truly special is planned.

While IPALCO deserves praise for leading the 500 Festival this year, there is more. The Hodowals' idea has produced a wonderful new memorial in honor of those special American heroes who, for military service above and beyond the call of duty, were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor down through the years of our history as a nation.

In recognition of the valor of these American heroes and to commemorate IPALCO for its generosity, I have sponsored a resolution honoring these champions.

This Memorial Day weekend in Indianapolis, nearly 100 of the 157 surviving Medal of Honor recipients will be honored as special guests for the dedication of the memorial and will serve as honorary Grand Marshals of the parade.

Our remembrance this day of those who earned our nation's highest military recognition by their heroism is a wondrous way to commemorate the service of all veterans.

Mr. Hodowal's idea, expressed in glass and sound and light and stone, transcends and transforms the traditional notion of such honors in our city. This monument, reminding and inspiring all who walk by the bank of the canal in Military Park, is an important piece, a central place, for the eternal honor these heroes are due.

For Mr. Hodowal, and for IPALCO Enterprises, this day is yours, as well. I am prouder than words can express to say that I know you. For this gift to the city and to the nation, for your civic service above and beyond the call, I salute you.

DON'T ABANDON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, Washington is bloated with rhetoric about education reform. But when we examine the actual programs and projects being proposed there is a tremendous shortfall between the giant needs and the tiny proposed solutions. Our nation's children are being denied adequate Opportunities-to-Learn. The opportunity to learn begins with a safe, conducive school building. But the federal government is spending almost nothing to improve the education infrastructure of school systems across the nation. We neglect and abandon school buildings we send a highly visible signal to our children and their parents. The message is that Congressmembers only want to play word games about education. The situation is serious, however, and requires a significant ap-

propriation of dollars. For a mere 417 dollars per student per year we can turn the current downward trend upward. If we do less than this minimal effort we are stumbling into a process where our cities will be doomed to paralysis and deadly shrinkage. The following RAP poem sums up the looming possible fate of our neglected cities. Also, attached is a Dear Colleague letter requesting co-sponsorship of H.R. 1820, an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Schools Assistance Act. H.R. 1820 provides adequate direct federal appropriations for school construction, modernization, repair, technology, security and renovation.

URBAN CLEANSING

Forget all Godly rules  
Go strip them of their schools  
Leave neighborhoods naked  
Ethnic cleansing is now banned  
But urban shrinkage is still planned  
Budgets will be raped  
Streets left uncertain  
Cops mandated to act real mean  
Forget all Godly rules  
Don't pay for education tools  
Go strip them of their schools  
Ethnic cleansing is now banned  
But urban shrinkage is still planned.

MAY 26, 1999.

IN THE YEAR 2000 WE LAUNCH THE MARCH TOWARD A NEW CYBERCIVILIZATION—WE ARE SPENDING 218 BILLION DOLLARS ON HIGHWAYS AND ROADS IN SIX YEARS

LET US INVEST HALF THIS AMOUNT—110 BILLION—IN FIVE YEARS TO BUILD, REPAIR AND MODERNIZE SCHOOLS

DEAR COLLEAGUE: Please join me as a co-sponsor for H.R. 1820, an amendment to the Elementary and Secondary Education Assistance Act which mandates a worthy federal investment in education for the children of America. Public opinion polls consistently show that our voters consider Federal Aid to Education as the nation's number one priority. We must now move beyond paltry pilot projects in our response to this long-term public outcry.

H.R. 1820 commits the Federal government to make the contribution most suitable to its role. Through direct appropriations we must make capital investments in the school infrastructures. Offer leadership in the building of schools and then leave the details of the day to day operations to local and state authorities.

H.R. 1820 proposes to help all schools by authorizing a per capita (on the basis of school age children) distribution of the allocations for the purposes of modernization, security, repair, technology and renovations as well as new school construction.

H.R. 1820 deserves national priority consideration for the following reasons:

The best protection for Social Security is an educated work force able to qualify for hi-tech jobs and steadily pay dollars into the Social Security trust fund.

The effective performance of our military in action utilizing hi-tech weaponry requires an educated pool of recruits.

The U.S. economy will continue to be the pace setter for the globe only if we maintain a steady flow of qualified brainpower and updated know-how at all performance levels—theoretical, scientific, technical and mechanical.

Invest in education and all other national goals become reachable.

Sincerely,

MAJOR R. OWENS,  
Member of Congress.