The American Lung Association has been fighting lung disease for more than 90 years. With the generous support of the public and the help of volunteers, they have seen many persons under 45 years old earning less than $10,000 per year have asthma. Fifty-three of 14.6 million persons in the United States have asthma. The Centers For Disease Control and Prevention reported a 61 percent increase in the asthma rate between 1982 and 1994. According to The American Lung Association, more than 5,600 people die of asthma in the United States annually. This represents a 45.3 percent increase in mortality between 1985 and 1995.

The death rate from asthma for African Americans is almost three times that of whites. Among chronic illnesses in children, asthma is the most common. Approximately 33 percent of asthma patients are under the age of 18.

In the United States, asthma is the number one cause of school absences attributed to chronic conditions, leading to an average 7.3 school days missed annually. One study estimated that in 1994, school days lost to asthma amounted to 1.2 million in caretaker's time lost from work, including outside employment and housekeeping.

Low income families are struck the hardest by asthma. Seventy-nine of every 1,000 people under 45 years old earning less than $10,000 per year have asthma. Fifty-three of every 1,000 people earning less than $35,000 per year have asthma.

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EXPOSING RACISM

In the House of Representatives

Wednesday, May 26, 1999

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to document and expose racism in America, I submit the following articles into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HOMOSEXUALS, DISABLED, ELDERLY ADDED TO HATE CRIMES LAW

RALEIGH.—People who are homosexuals, the disabled or the elderly and target them for crimes could face increased sentences under a bill approved by a House committee. The measure, which now goes to the full House, expands North Carolina's hate crimes law to include sexual orientation, disabilities, gender and age. Crimes that are proven to be motivated by hate would be increased to at least a felony.

The hate crimes law now applies to race, religion and national origin.

"This bill doesn't protect anybody," Rep. Martin Nesbitt, D-Buncombe, said Tuesday as the House Judiciary I Committee debated the bill. "It punishes people for perpetrating a crime because they hate a class of people."

The bill "centers on the question of whether we will be civil in North Carolina," said Rep. Paul Luebke, D-Chapel Hill, one of the bill's two primary sponsors. "It is, to put it in a phrase, a statement that we will not hate.

The bill is named after Matthew Shepard, a homosexual with North Carolina connections who was beaten to death in Wyoming. John Rustin of the North Carolina Family Policy Council called Shepard's death a "brutal and inexcusable crime." But the homosexual acts that would be covered by the