a demanding self-assessment experience that involved the entire school community, including students, teachers, parents, administrators, and bus drivers.

Each of these schools have been judged particularly effective in meeting local, state, and national goals. In addition, each school displayed strong leadership, clear vision and a sense of mission shared by the entire school community. High quality teaching, challenging and up-to-date curriculum, policies that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning, family involvement, and equity in education to assure that all students are helped to achieve high standards.

Blue Ribbon schools do not rest on their laurels. Each is committed to sharing best practices with other schools, and to helping to identify their strengths and weaknesses.

Special congratulations are due to Cheltenham Elementary School for designing a curriculum that encourages students to re-include them in their community. Cheltenham students take field trips to historic homes, the police station, the township building, the library, and the local judge. Their learning also makes the students aware of the needs of the less fortunate through activities including food baskets and visits to nursing homes. As a result of these projects, Cheltenham students have gathered money to build a wall for a school in Ecuador and to purchase materials for a school devastated by a hurricane in Florida. They have also written letters to governmental officials on behalf of a Native American group. Cheltenham students are learning civic responsibility at a young age.

McKinley Elementary School has demonstrated excellence in creating a safe school environment. The McKinley community understands that academic success can only grow in a violence-free class-rooms, and has been a leader in these issues. They have taken a proactive approach to violence prevention by developing non-violent conflict resolution strategies, peer mediation program, parenting workshops, and school and police collaboration. The importance of McKinley’s work in this area has been underscored by recent tragedies in schools across the nation.

Thomas Fitzwater School has taken special steps to meet the needs of all students. This commitment to have every child experience success is exemplified by the programs and accomplishments such as Thomas Fitzwater’s Support One Student Initiative, a child advocacy program to assist at-risk students. Each identified student is matched with a volunteer staff member. These members include professional, custodial, secretarial, and cafeteria staff. Regular personal contact by caring and supporting staff member promotes a positive environment and guides the student away from inappropriate and possibly destructive behavior. Another example of Thomas Fitzwater’s inclusive policies is the collaboration between the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit special education classes and the regular education classes in our school. Throughout the county, the Intermediate Unit provides classes for children with low-incidence handicaps. Four of these classes are housed in Thomas Fitzwater’s school building. Regular education children assist in these classes and are very sensitive to these exceptions.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE COMMUNITY NURSING DEMONSTRATION EXTENSION ACT OF 1999**

**HON. JIM RAMSTAD**
OF MINNESOTA

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Thursday, May 27, 1999**

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, as a strong supporter of home- and community-based services for the elderly and individuals with disabilities, I rise to re-introduce legislation similar to that which I sponsored in the 104th and 105th Congresses to extend the demonstration authority under the Medicare program for Community Nursing Organization (CNO) projects.

CNO projects serve Medicare beneficiaries in home- and community-based settings under contracts that provide a fixed, monthly capitation payment for each beneficiary who enrolls to receive the benefits. The benefits include not only Medicare-covered home care and medical equipment and supplies, but other services not presently covered by traditional Medicare, including patient education, case management and health assessments. CNOs are able to offer extra benefits without increasing Medicare costs because of their emphasis on primary and preventative care and their coordinated management of the patient’s care.

The current CNO demonstration program, which was authorized by Congress in 1987 and extended for 2 years in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, involves more than 6,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Arizona, Illinois, Minnesota, New York, and Washington. The purpose of the demonstration is to extend the cost-savings and health care-enhancing features of Medicare through the extension of this demonstration will not increase Medicare expenditures for care. CNOs actually save Medicare dollars by providing better and more accessible care in home and community settings, allowing beneficiaries to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and nursing home admissions. By demonstrating what a primary care oriented nursing practice can accomplish with enrollees who are elderly or disabled, CNOs are helping show us how to increase benefits, save scarce dollars and improve the quality of life for patients.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to consider this bill carefully and join me in seeking to extend these cost-savings and health care-enhancing CNO demonstrations for another three years.

**DEDICATION OF THE NEW CITY HALL**

**HON. JACK KINGSTON**
OF GEORGIA

**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Thursday, May 27, 1999**

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the volunteer efforts of so many people in Offerman have been so extraordinary that one is tempted to suggest that the federal government consider this method of putting up new buildings in order to save ourselves from the cost overruns, delays, and problems that seem to plague this kind of enterprise all too often.

The efforts of people like the Edward Daniel family, Mrs. Lucille Chancey, Mrs. Ethel Roberson, the Sam Cason family, the Ray Cason family, the Harvey Dixon family, the Ellis Denison family, and so many, many others have been so inspiring that the entire community has created a feeling of togetherness that is similar to the feeling one experiences at a family reunion.

And speaking of families, the extended Cason family contributed to the enterprise in a way that brought generations together.