

Jewish Committee, City of Houston Affirmative Action Commission, and Leadership Houston Class XII.

Madeleine Appel has been married for 36 years to Dr. Michael F. Appel and she is the proud mother of two sons and two daughters-in-law.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Madeleine Appel for her service to her community and to Houston. She is the best of public servants and an inspiration to others who want to engage in public service.

A BILL TO PERMANENTLY EXTEND THE WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT AND MAKE CERTAIN IMPROVEMENTS IN THE PROGRAM

HON. AMO HOUGHTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, today I am joined by my colleague from New York, Mr. RANGEL, together with a number of other colleagues, in introducing our bill, The Work Opportunity Tax Credit Reform and Improvement Act of 1999. The bill would permanently extend the Work Opportunity Tax Credit and make other changes discussed below.

After a number of improvements over the past few years, the program is being well received in providing employment, with training, for our disadvantaged. We believe the WOTC and Welfare to Work Credit (WTWC) programs have been very important in helping individuals become employed and make the transition from welfare to work. Such training can be costly and the credits provide an incentive to employers to hire the disadvantaged and provide the needed training while offsetting costs associated with the latter effort.

Of course, many believe that the program would be even more successful if it could be extended indefinitely. Employers, both large and small, could depend on the program and would be more likely to seek out potentially qualified employees. That change would benefit everyone.

We have proposed several other changes in the bill which would streamline and simplify the program. First, the Welfare to Work Credit program would be merged into WOTC, by establishing an additional category for WTWC. The separate Section 51A for WTWC would be repealed.

The bill would also standardize the definition of wages based on the current law WTWC definition. This change broadens the definition by including benefits paid to the employee. The bill would also apply the same 40% credit rate for both the WOTC categories (first year wages of \$6,000) and for the WTWC category (first and second year wages of \$10,000) in the interests of simplification.

Lastly, the bill would add "Section 501(c)(3)" organizations as a qualifying employer. The credit would be treated as an offset against employment tax liabilities otherwise due. It is believed that these organizations could hire and train many of the disadvantaged, and the credit would provide an

incentive for such organizations to seek out these individuals. This provision would add a new avenue for moving individuals from welfare to work. Because this is a new change to the program, even though included in proposed legislation in the past, it is being proposed as a three year pilot project. This period will allow a period of time to determine if this feature of the overall WOTC program is effective and produces the desired result.

We urge our colleagues to join us in co-sponsoring this important legislation to extend and improve the Work Opportunity Tax Credit program.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 167, had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RECOGNIZING THE EFFORTS OF THE EMPLOYEES OF ROCKLAND COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of the employees of the Rockland County Environmental Management Council for their work and dedication in serving the people and communities of Rockland County.

In this spirit, the employees of the Rockland County Environmental Management Council will be celebrating their 25th anniversary on June 16, 1999. Over the past 25 years, they have received 16 awards, including 12 from the New York State Association of Environmental Management Councils, and 4 from the National Association of Counties. In 1997, the Council won the first place New York State Project/Plan Award for "outstanding accomplishments in enhancing the quality of the environment in their community."

For the past 25 years, the employees of the Rockland County Environmental Management Council have achieved many goals, ranging from sponsoring a public forum on water conservation to collaborating with the Rockland County Health Department on implementing a county noise ordinance. Their efforts to protect and preserve the environment include sponsoring a "Sun Day" (a regional conference on solar energy), coordinating the household hazardous waste collection project, serving on a county legislative subcommittee on recycling, and helping to prepare Rockland County's solid waste management plan.

The employees of the Rockland County Management Environmental Council have dedicated their lives to improving life within the Hudson Valley, and are to be commended for their outstanding efforts.

Accordingly, I invite my colleagues to join with me in thanking the employees of the Rockland County Environmental Management Council for their hard work and continued dedication to improving our quality of life.

COMMEMORATING THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NEW JERSEY TENANTS ORGANIZATION

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 9, 1999

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the New Jersey Tenants Organization (NJTO).

The NJTO was founded 30 years ago during an extreme housing shortage. Tenants in New Jersey faced unconscionable rent increases and had little protection from landlord abuse. Landlord-tenant laws at that time were very primitive and gave practically no protection to tenants. In fact, the only right afforded to tenants was the right of pay.

This situation compelled a group of concerned citizens to come together to form the NJTO to combat these conditions. Using strategies ranging from rent strikes to legal battles, the NJTO succeeded in getting the State of New Jersey to enact the State Retaliatory Eviction Law in its first year of existence. This crucial triumph was responsible for paving the way for a massive wave of state-wide tenant mobilization.

Over the past 30 years, the NJTO has grown into the oldest statewide tenants organization in the United States and can boast of being the driving force behind 18 major landlord-tenant laws. During this time, the NJTO's advocacy on behalf of New Jerseyans has resulted in the strongest legal protections for tenants throughout the entire country.

This year, the NJTO is counting among its honorees Arlene Glassman, a neighbor of mine from Fair Lawn, New Jersey and Bob Ryley of Jackson Township, New Jersey. Arlene has been a committed member of the NJTO for the past 20 years and has served on the Board of Directors since 1995. In Fair Lawn, she made a name for herself by successfully leading the effort to reduce the allowable rent and revise the rent ordinance. Thanks to her leadership, Fair Lawn's leaders and elected officials have a greater appreciation of the needs of the tenants in the town.

Bob Ryley will also be recognized for his work with the Mobil Home Owners Association of New Jersey (MHOA). Since joining the group in 1984, Bob obtained mobile home tenants the right of first refusal should the landlord decide to sell their park. In this era of political apathy, Bob has succeeded in his efforts to keep the MHOA's members actively involved on issues of concern to them.

Both Arlene and Bob will receive the NJTO's Ronald B. Atlas Award on June 27 for their years of service on behalf of New Jersey tenants. This prestigious award is the NJTO's way of articulating the organization's gratitude for all of the time and energy that Arlene and Bob have given to the group and I am proud to extend my congratulations to them today on