

of Mississippi; Thomas Sowell, Stanford University; Richard Stroup, Montana State University; Robert D. Tollison, University of Mississippi; Eugene Volokh, UCLA; Michael R. Ward, University of Illinois; Benjamin Zycher, UCLA; Todd Zywicki, George Mason University.

CROP INSURANCE EQUALIZATION ACT OF 1999

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Crop Insurance Equalization Act of 1999. I am honored to have Representative MARION BERRY, Representative CHIP PICKERING, and Representative SANFORD BISHOP joining me as original cosponsors of this comprehensive crop insurance reform legislation.

The need for an effective safety net could not be more obvious. It is imperative that we provide our nation's farmers with a federal crop insurance program that is affordable and workable. Our farmers cannot and should not become dependent on annual disaster bills; in the past nine years, the federal government has spent over \$9.5 billion in emergency farm funds. By crafting a strong program that will both increase participation in the program and increase affordability to farmers across the nation, we have sought to eliminate the need for such yearly crop loss disaster aid.

Back in February, Georgia's Eighth District hosted the House Agriculture Committee's Subcommittee on Risk Management, Research, and Specialty Crops for hearings on the federal crop insurance program. During those hearings, I personally witnessed how frustrated farmers and agents are with the program. Simply put, the program does not work for them.

The Crop Insurance Equalization Act of 1999 addresses concerns that have been voiced to the extent possible. This reform package significantly improves the program not only for farmers in the Southeastern United States, but for those across the entire nation. This bill does not simply make cosmetic changes to the program; it focuses attention on the root of the problem by seeking to restore an improved, updated rating system. Beyond reform for the crop insurance program, this bill expands the non-insured assistance program for those who cannot participate in crop insurance.

Crop insurance reform is a top priority for this Congress, and the Crop Insurance Equalization Act of 1999 is a sufficient vehicle for achieving appropriate reform.

TRIBUTE TO JONAS BRONCK APARTMENTS

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is with joy and pride that I rise to pay tribute to Jonas

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Bronck Apartments for Senior Citizens, which will celebrate its 25th Anniversary of services to seniors and the Bronx community on Wednesday, June 15, 1999.

Mr. Speaker, the history of Jonas Bronck Apartments begins with the merger of one nearly-defunct Lutheran congregation and one small but vibrant Lutheran congregation in the Tremont section of the Bronx 32 years ago. In June of 1967, Pr. Albert O. Wollert, the pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church on East 178th Street, was called to serve concurrently as pastor of St. Thomas English Lutheran Church on Topping Avenue. St. Thomas English Lutheran Church had had a short but fruitful life of 59 years, but due to radical demographic changes in the neighborhood after the Second World War it has dwindled to a remnant of old members.

The young and visionary Pr. Wollert, then 39, saw an opportunity to bring life and service out of the death of a church. Within months Pr. Wollert managed to convince the "old St. Thomas" members to formally join with Trinity. He also managed to convince the members of Trinity to receive the small remnant of "old Saint Thomas" members into Trinity Church, and to name the merged congregation "Saint Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church of The Bronx." The entire operation was finalized on December 12, 1967, and on Christmas Eve the two congregations worshipped together for the first time. From this time forward the church on East 178th Street, the current location, would be known simply as "St. Thomas Lutheran Church."

On June 3, 1968, the "old Saint Thomas" building, which is still standing at its original location, was sold to Bethany Church and Missionary Alliance. For over a year, the St. Thomas Congregation considered investing the proceeds in different types of projects.

After many adjustments and readjustments, and some help from then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller, the plans for a building to be called Jonas Bronck Apartments for Senior Citizens were approved, and a combination of state and federal funding was secured. Final approval was received on April 24, 1970, from the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal.

Mr. Speaker, on May 5, 1974, Jonas Bronck Apartments for Senior Citizens was formally dedicated and opened its doors to the senior citizens of our Bronx community and the larger New York metropolitan area. Though Jonas Bronck Apartments was the brainchild of a former pastor and the parishioners of St. Thomas Lutheran Church of The Bronx, the 216 unit, 16 story facility for seniors is a success story of cooperation between the private and governmental sectors.

I applaud the commitment and the efforts of everyone involved with Jonas Bronck Apartments for Senior Citizens, its board, staff, and supporters for the assistance they provide to the elderly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Jonas Bronck Apartments for Senior Citizens and the individuals who have made 25 years of service possible.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained yesterday returning from my congressional district. Had I been present for rollcall Vote No. 204, I would have voted "yea" on H.R. 1400, the Bond Price Competition Improvement Act of 1999.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI RICHARD A. BLOCK

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Rabbi Richard Block, an outstanding leader of the 14th Congressional District and senior rabbi at the Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, California for the last twelve years. Rabbi Block steps down as head of this remarkable congregation this weekend to accept the post of President and Chief Executive of the World Union for Progressive Judaism in Jerusalem, the world's largest organization of religiously affiliated Jews.

Rabbi Block was ordained and awarded a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1982. During his academic career, Rabbi Block earned numerous awards for academic distinction, writing and sermonic excellence.

Upon ordination, he was chosen Rabbi of Greenwich Reform Synagogue in Riverside, Connecticut and in 1987 came to Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills, California.

As senior rabbi he helped create a variety of programs aimed at advancing Jewish education and congregational life. His achievements include: Experiment in Congregation, a unique national partnership aimed at reinvigorating Jewish education and congregational life; the creation of a nationally recognized program to integrate émigrés from the former Soviet Union in Jewish life; the Koret Synagogue Initiative, a collaboration between synagogues, the Koret Foundation and the Jewish Community Federation. Rabbi Block was honored by the Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco with their prestigious 1999 "FAMMY Award", in appreciation and recognition of his extraordinary caring and dedicated community service.

Prior to his rabbinical studies, this remarkable man graduated from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, as well as the Yale Law School. He served as Editor of the Law Review and as a law clerk to a U.S. District Court Judge. Rabbi Block served in the U.S. Navy's Judge Advocate General's Corps, including a term as Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in San Diego.

Rabbi Block and his wife Susan have been married over thirty years and have two exceptional and loving sons, Joshua and Zachary.

Our community will miss Rabbi Block immensely. At the same time, we are extremely