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Lakes—the storms may not be as massive, but they can arise suddenly with strong winds. Shoals and islands present hazards for commercial shipping and private sailors, and tales like the loss of the Edmund Fitzgerald are almost as well known as the story loss of the Titanic.

What was true in the early days of search and rescue remains true today. The men and the women who venture forth on rescue missions must possess one key trait—courage.

It's no wonder, then, Mr. Speaker, that the crew of U.S. Coast Guard Station Charlevoix have an important part in the great tradition of endeavoring to save the lives of men and women in peril on the water.

Their own log records such remarkable moments as bringing 500 people safely to shore in 1906 from a vessel aground off the Lake Michigan shore, searching for the crew of a downed B-52 bomber in the 1970s, and even rushing ashore to treat individuals wounded in a celebration fireworks accident in 1997.

The presence of the Coast Guard throughout my district is extremely important, Mr. Speaker. These brave men and women have my deepest respect and admiration, and strongest support in whatever is needed to permit them to fulfill this essential mission, to keep Search and Rescue units *semper paratus*—always ready.

Technology may continue to change, but I trust another 100 years will find Coast Guard Station Charlevoix always ready to serve and assist on the Great Lakes.

FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT
FINANCING, AND RELATED PRO-
GRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT,
2001

SPEECH OF

HON. DONNA MC CHRISTENSEN

OF VIRGIN ISLANDS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 12, 2000

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4811) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of the amendment of my colleague, the Gentlelady from California, Ms. LEE, to restore the funding for Global Aids assistance that was cut from the President's request.

This body Mr. Chairman, invariably never ceases to amaze me. Here we are in the middle of a monumental life and family destroying, economy breaking, HIV/AIDS pandemic. Instead of increasing funding to address it, as the situation calls out desperately for us to do, we are codifying restrictions on family planning funding, slashing funding for debt relief to some of the same affected countries and others, and reducing the flow of drastically needed funds for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment to a mere drip. This is a travesty.

A recent UN report revealed that AIDS will cause early death in as many as one-half of the young adults in the hardest hit countries of

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southern Africa, causing unprecedented populations imbalances. In one country alone, Botswana, it is predicted that two thirds of that country's 15-year-olds will die of AIDS before age 50. But as bad as the impact is now, the full blow is still some years off. This loss at a time when men and women would be at their most productive, in countries that are only now beginning to come out from under the deep effects of colonialism and tyrannical rules, will be devastating.

Our communities here in the U.S. are bleeding, these are hemorrhaging. Both crises need to be appropriately addressed, and addressed now.

We are no longer in a world where any one country, nor even one neighborhood can labor under the impression that they are isolated. The devastation, and the disruptive effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic may be at its very worst in far away, exotic lands, but the dire effects will ripple until they reach our shores. Combined with our domestic HIV/AIDS crisis, which also is not being adequately addressed, the bell will increasingly toll for us.

We have the opportunity today to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors in Africa and other countries today, by supporting the Lee amendment. We must also resolve to apply the remedies in the magnitude that is needed here at home as well.

\$100 million is not a large sum. It is merely a drop in the bucket, against the backdrop of the enormity of the pandemic. But it is a start. It is seed money—an incentive for other countries, private corporations and foundations to join this vital effort.

The Congressional Black Caucus and its Health Brain Trust, which I chair, has made HIV/AIDS our chief priority. We began here in this country with the call for a state of emergency and funding which has come to be known as the CBC Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative. But as we got funding and began to apply those dollars to the needs of our communities, we recognized that the problem was far deeper than HIV and AIDS. It was a problem of poor and deficient health infrastructure, it was and is a problem of communities beset with a myriad of social and economic problems.

As we began the work of addressing all of the ills that lay beneath the tip of the AIDS iceberg, we also came face to face with the grim reality that is AIDS in Africa, and AIDS in the Caribbean, as well.

And so, Mr. Chairman, what we want this body and our colleagues to recognize is that HIV and AIDS is a pandemic for people of color, around the world, including here in the United States. Achieving adequate prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS in Africa and other parts of the world, is not that much different from combating it here. The social, economic, and health care infrastructure deficiencies are pretty much the same. And that is a real shame.

So, I am asking this body, to support Congresswoman LEE's efforts, to support the CBC initiative and to fully fund it this year and for several years to come as needed.

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PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, it was my intention to vote "yea" on rollcall vote No. 324, the H. Amdt. 905 to HR 4690, offered by Representative John Hostetler, but was recorded as voting "nay." The amendment was designed to add a new section, which provides that no funds in the bill may be used to enforce, implement, or administer the provisions of the settlement document dated March 17, 2000, between Smith and Wesson and the Department of the Treasury.

The Second Amendment to the United States Constitution clearly defines the right of Americans to possess firearms. The Second Amendment reads: "A well-regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." I firmly believe this provision prohibits the federal government from denying citizens this right.

The agreement reached by the Administration and Smith & Wesson should not be used to coerce other manufacturers into abiding by an agreement of which they are not a party. On June 21, 2000, I voted to limit the repercussions of this Smith & Wesson agreement by supporting two of Representative Hostetler's amendments to the VA-HLD Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year (FY) 2001. It is my intention to vote in favor of similar amendments to future FY 2001 Appropriations bills.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RAIL
RETIREMENT REFORM

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, I am very pleased to introduce today H.R. 4844, the Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2000, on behalf of myself, the Ranking Member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. OBERSTAR; the Chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, Mr. ARCHER; the Ranking Member of the Committee on Ways and Means, Mr. RANGEL; the Chairman of the Ground Transportation Subcommittee, Mr. PETRI; the Ranking Member of the Ground Transportation Subcommittee, Mr. RAHALL; the Chairman of the Social Security Subcommittee, Mr. SHAW; and the Ranking Member of the Social Security Subcommittee, Mr. MATSUI.

This is a good bill which deserves the support of the House. The following is a joint statement on behalf of the eight original sponsors.

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE EIGHT ORIGINAL
SPONSORS OF THE RAILROAD RETIREMENT
AND SURVIVORS' IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2000

We are pleased to join together to introduce the Railroad Retirement and Survivors'

Improvement Act of 2000. This legislation will make important improvements in the railroad retirement program.

The introduction of this legislation by the bipartisan leadership of the two House committees with jurisdiction over this program represents a significant step toward enactment. We are pleased that Congress continues to have the close working relationship with railroad management and labor groups that has allowed us to come together on this bill today.

This reform legislation makes several improvements in the current benefit structure, especially for widows and widowers. In addition, the legislation modernizes the system's investment practices and strengthens the financing of the program.

This legislation is the product of several years of complex negotiations between rail management and rail labor. These negotiations were also given impetus by the September 1998 hearing held by the Subcommittee on Ground Transportation on benefit reform legislation authored by our colleague JACK QUINN. Although not all representatives of rail labor could support the final compromise signed in January of this year, a significant majority have endorsed the agreement, as have the groups representing rail retirees. We hope that as this bill moves through the legislative process, the full value of the benefits it brings to the system will be carefully assessed, and that it will ultimately receive the support of all groups.

The Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2000 is the end product of a bipartisan collaborative process. It is a bill that each of us supports and is committed to bring to enactment during the remaining days of the 106th Congress. We are pleased to introduce it today.

RECOGNIZING STEPHEN WEISS, JR.

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Stephen Weiss, Jr., a man who has been very instrumental in assisting hundreds of Brooklyn residents in the transition from apartment renters to first time homeowners.

Mr. Weiss, a graduate of Yale University, is an executive with Flintlock Construction Services, LLC, as well as with several other property development companies. Mr. Weiss is also actively involved in the operations of a property management company. Mr. Weiss joined these various firms in 1980, with the goal of using his positions with them to develop and construct primarily affordable housing, both for rental and for sale. Mr. Weiss also used these enterprises to develop much-needed medical centers, to further benefit the community.

With his partner, DeCosta Headley, Mr. Weiss has developed and built hundreds of affordable apartments in East New York, Brownsville and Bedford Stuyvesant. Many of these homes, built to house working people, were rebuilt out of abandoned shells that used to blight these neighborhoods.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing the lifelong efforts of Stephen Weiss, Jr., and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

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LIEUTENANT COMMANDER DOUG FEARS, USCG

HON. SONNY CALLAHAN

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Lieutenant Commander Doug Fears, who recently left his position as the United States Coast Guard's (USCG) House liaison officer to attend the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

Lieutenant Commander Doug Fears grew up on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. He enlisted in the USCG in 1982 and served on the Cutter *Taney* (WHEC 37) home ported in Portsmouth, Virginia, and in the pre-commissioning detail for the Cutter *Tampa* (WMEC 902) in Norfolk, Virginia. He attended the USCG's Electronics Technician "A" school on Governor's Island, New York, and the Navy's Broadened Opportunity for Officer Selection and Training (BOOST) Program in San Diego, California, before accepting an appointment to the USCG Academy in 1985.

While at the academy, Lieutenant Commander Fears was active in a number of programs and served as the regimental commander of the Corps of Cadets. He graduated from the academy in May 1989 and subsequently served as Operations Officer and Navigator on the Cutter *Basswood* (WLB 388) in Guam, Marianas Islands.

He was then selected for the USCG/Navy officer exchange program in 1991. He served on the Aegis cruiser, U.S.S. *Vincennes* (CG49), as the Aegis Fire Control Officer. He subsequently served on the Throat Upgrade cruiser U.S.S. *Leay* (CG 16) as the Combat Information Center Officer. Both ships were home ported in San Diego, California. During his tours, he deployed in support of Operations Desert Storm/Southern Watch in the Northern Arabian (Persian) Gulf, Restore Hope in the Indian Ocean off Somalia, Blue Line in the Eastern Pacific off South America and various bi-lateral exercises in the Sea of Japan and South China Sea.

In July 1993, Lieutenant Commander Fears reported to Seattle, Washington, as a search and rescue controller and command duty officer in the Thirteenth District Command Center. From 1994 to 1996, he served as aide and executive assistant to the Thirteenth District Commander, Rear Admiral John Lockwood.

In June 1996, Lieutenant Commander Fears assumed command of the Cutter *Sitkinak* (WP 1329), home ported in Key West, Florida. During his tour, he was involved in numerous counter-narcotics, alien migrant interdiction and search and rescue operations, including Operations Able Response and Frontier Shield. He is a designated Coast Guard Cutterman and Navy Surface Warfare Officer, a licensed Master (100 gross tons) and has been awarded over two dozen personal unit, campaign and service awards. He is the 1997 national recipient of the U.S. Navy League's Captain David H. Jarvis Award for inspirational leadership.

From June 1998 to June 2000, Lieutenant Commander Fears was assigned to the United States House of Representatives as the as-

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sistant USCG liaison. In this capacity, he unselfishly served me, other members and their staffs in fulfilling requests and providing vital information pertinent to the USCG. My staff worked with Lieutenant Commander Fears closely over the past two years, and I know for a fact they could not have done their job properly without the able-bodied assistance of this fine officer. When a problem or issue pertinent to the USCG surfaced in my office, Lieutenant Commander Fears was the first one my staff or I called and, like clockwork, he promptly and thoroughly addressed the matter at hand.

In August 2000, he reports to the Naval War College, College of Command and Staff, in Newport, Rhode Island, where I know he will find great success. Lieutenant Commander Fears' future is bright, Mr. Speaker, and I wish him and his wife, Kate, the best as they forge ahead.

HONORING RICHMOND COUNTY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL BETA CLUB QUIZ BOWL TEAM

HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2000

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of the Richmond County Senior High School Beta Club Quiz Bowl Team. Competing in the 20th Annual National Beta Club Convention in mid-June, team captain Joey Moree, John Bream, Allen Hodges, William Morgan, and alternate Mary Catherine Knight placed second in the nation and nearly came home to North Carolina with the National Championship. The Richmond Senior High team was one of 18 teams from southeastern and midwestern states. Some 2,500 Betas participated in the 3 day tournament in Arlington, Texas.

Having placed second in the North Carolina State Beta Quiz Bowl with the help of team member Montgomery Morris, the quiz bowl team earned the right to attend the national convention. The other five team members traveled to Arlington accompanied by advisors Judy Harrelson and Robert Graves. The Richmond team cruised through the first three rounds of the tournament. In the first round, Richmond Senior High defeated Martin County, Florida 185 to 95. The students breezed to a 250 to 140 victory over Koshkonong, Missouri in the second round. However, the semifinals proved to be more challenging. After trailing Pendleton Heights, Indiana 80 to 75 at halftime, the team roared to life and dominated the second half, winning with a resounding 265 to 105 tally. Drawing a crowd of over 2,000 Betas, the final round was a close contest throughout the match. Battling Southside, South Carolina, the finals came down to the very last question, with Southside pulling ahead of Richmond Senior High with a single bonus to win the championship 155 to 150.

Mr. Speaker, the accomplishments of the Richmond Senior High School Beta Club Quiz Bowl Team deserve recognition. The hard work and dedication of Mr. Moree, Mr. Bream, Mr. Hodges, Mr. Morgan, Ms. Knight, and Mr. Morris have made their peers, teachers and