

INTRODUCTION OF THE BOOK  
STAMP ACT JULY 27, 2000

**HON. RUSH D. HOLT**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2000*

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, in this new century, an education is more important to Americans than ever before in our nation's history. We have progressed from the agricultural-based economy of our forefathers to one that is knowledge-based and dependent on information and communications technology.

Today, in order to succeed and even just to function in this new economy, Americans must have a solid education and foundation of skills. In addition, Americans must be equipped with the skills necessary to continue learning. They must be prepared to survive in a world of rapid social and technological change.

Literacy is the primary tool needed for lifelong learning. It opens up doors to new opportunities and experiences.

Yet, today, too many Americans are unable to read a single sentence. In fact, nearly 40 percent of our nation's children cannot read at grade-level by the end of the third grade. In disadvantaged communities, this failure rate is a shocking 60 percent. Without the basic skill of literacy, these children are likely to fall to the wayside in our new economy.

We must combat illiteracy. However, we cannot wait until these children start school; we must reach them earlier. We should eagerly seek to give these children the excitement, the satisfaction, the empowerment, and the impetus for growth that comes from reading.

Studies have confirmed that reading to young children in the years before age 5 has a profound effect on their ability to learn. Doctors have told us that a child's brain needs intellectual stimulation to grow to its full potential, so we must read to our children from birth through school age. But many families do not have access to children's books. A recent study found that 60 percent of kindergarten children who performed poorly in school did not own a single book.

The Book Stamp Act, which I am introducing today along with my colleagues Mr. UPTON, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. MILLER, Mr. OWENS, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, and which was recently introduced in the Senate by Senators KENNEDY and HUTCHISON, will help provide children with their own books before they enter school.

The act authorizes an appropriation of \$50 million a year for this purpose. It also creates a special postage stamp, which will feature an early learning character and which will sell at a slightly higher rate than the normal 33 cents, to create additional revenues for the Book Stamp Program.

The resources will be distributed through the Child Care and Development Block Grant to the state child care agency in each state. The state agency then will allocate its funds to local child care research and referral agencies throughout the state on the basis of local need.

These non-profit agencies will work with established book distribution programs such as

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First Book, Reading is Fundamental, and Reach Out and Read to coordinate the buying of discounted books and the distribution of the books to children.

However, since these young children cannot read on their own. These agencies will also work with parents and child care providers to educate them on the best ways to read to children and the most effective use of books with children at various stages of development.

Illiteracy is a serious problem. For our Nation to continue to thrive in this new century, we must ensure that all children have the ability to read and learn. The Book Stamp Act will help achieve this goal.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.

HONORING LOUIS' LUNCH ON ITS  
105TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2000*

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to celebrate the 105th anniversary of a true New Haven landmark: Louis' Lunch. Recently the Lassen family celebrated this landmark as well as the 100th anniversary of their claim to fame—the invention and commercial serving of one of America's favorites, the hamburger.

A hundred years ago, Louis Lassen, founder of Louis' Lunch, ran a small lunch wagon selling steak sandwiches to local factory workers. A frugal business man, Louis did not like to waste the excess beef from his daily lunch rush. So, he ground up the excess, grilled it, and served it between two slices of bread—without ketchup. With a meat grinder and a streak of that infamous Yankee ingenuity, Louis changed the course of American culinary history, serving America's first hamburger. This is the story that each faithful patron will hear when they visit the small Crown Street luncheonette still owned and operated by the third and fourth generations of the Lassen family. Hamburgers are still the specialty of the house where steak is ground fresh each day and hand molded, still slow cooked on the same turn-of-the-century gas grills, broiled vertically, and served between two slices of toast with your choice of three acceptable garnish: cheese, tomato, and onion. Requests for ketchup or mustard are briskly declined. This is the home of the greatest hamburger in the world—a claim that is not easily contested—perhaps best known for allowing their customers to have a burger their way or not at all.

More than just another diner, Louis' Lunch has held a special place in the hearts of the residents of New Haven for more than a century. Thousands turned out in the 1960s and 1970s when the city announced plans to raze Louis' to make room for a new high rise building—testimony to its immeasurable popularity and special place in our City's history. After fighting City Hall for ten years, Ken Lassen, Louis' grandson, agreed to move the luncheonette to its present Crown Street location. To help with the reconstruction, patrons do-

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nated bricks for the new walls. Today, as he takes you on the "tour of the walls", Ken recounts each brick's unique story and can point to stones from Rome's Colosseum, paving bricks from Lisbon, Portugal, even a chunk of rock from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Designated an historic landmark in 1967, it was with great pride that I nominated Louis' Lunch as a part of the Library of Congress' "Local Legacies" project earlier this year. The Lassens and the community of New Haven shared unparalleled excitement when the Library of Congress named Louis' Lunch a "Connecticut Legacy"—nothing could be more true.

The Lassen family has left an indelible mark on our community's history—and our country's history. I know the New Haven community will join me as I stand today to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Ken Lassen and his family on the 105th anniversary of Louis' Lunch. My best wishes for another century of success.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE 65TH AN-  
NIVERSARY OF SOCIAL SECUR-  
ITY

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 27, 2000*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate a great day in our nation's history. On August 14, 1935, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed into law the historical Social Security Act. This law has been improving Americans' lives for sixty-five years, and I recognize the anniversary of its signing.

Social Security represents a sacred compact between the generations that benefits both seniors and younger members of our nation. Senior citizens have earned the right to these benefits from a lifetime of work. Social Security has granted our elders the peace to live independently and with dignity. In addition, the great pressures placed on our younger generations to support their elderly parents are lessened because of America's Social Security program.

Complementing retirement benefits, the Social Security Administration also provides citizens with disability, survivor, Medicare, and family benefits. In fact, one in three social security beneficiaries is, in fact, not a retiree. As a result, Social Security has grown into a family protection plan which forms a base of economic security in today's society. In my view, Social Security is the most successful federal program in history.

As President Roosevelt explained upon signing the Social Security Act, "this law . . . represents a cornerstone in a structure which is being built but is by no means complete." As he predicted, the program has been amended many times throughout the past sixty-five years. With each change, the Social Security Administration has extended its aid to another group of needy Americans. Once again, as Roosevelt foreshadowed, the law has served to "take care of human needs and at the same time provide the United States an economic structure of vastly greater soundness."