

These improvements would allow more of the child-support collected from noncustodial parents to reach the children on whose behalf these payments are made. When fully implemented, this bill would increase income to children and their custodial parents by over \$1 billion a year. In addition the bill simplifies child support distribution rules, and promotes responsible fatherhood. Passage of this bill will result in several important benefits to families by distributing more support to families to help them maintain employment and reduce welfare receipt, simplifying state child support systems and providing needed services to low-income parents to help them support and raise their children.

The bill ensures that once a family has left welfare, that family has the first claim on all child support paid by the father. Under current law, child support collected is first applied to taxes owed to the state. Child support payments begin to repay debts owed to custodial families only after the debt to the state has been completely repaid. The changes proposed in the Child Support Distribution Act would help families that have left welfare to stay off welfare by providing additional resources to them at a time when they are likely to be vulnerable to economic hardship. Child support is an important income supplement for low-income working families. According to the Center for Law and Social Policy, when single-mother families receive child support, their poverty rate drops from 33 to 22 percent.

The Child Support Distribution Act would also dramatically simplify rules governing the assignment and distribution of child support payments. According to the National Governors' Association, "The complexity of current child support distribution rules creates a costly administrative burden for both states and the Federal Government." The current rules are expensive to administer, and difficult for child support staff to explain and for parents to understand. The Child Support Distribution Act addresses these issues and provides funding to community-based and state programs working directly with low-income custodial parents to help them support their children financially and emotionally. This legislation gives funding preferences to community programs that partner with domestic violence programs and child support agencies.

This bill includes a number of complementary provisions that are beneficial to low-income children and families. Several provisions in the bill are intended to help low-income fathers improve their capacity to support their children financially and emotionally. The changes the bill makes in the child support system would allow a larger portion of the child support that low-income fathers pay to benefit their children. These provisions represent an investment in stronger families that should reduce poverty among these children, help low-income parents receive services they need, and strengthen children's ties with their fathers, who will be better able to see the result of their hard-earned contributions when they pay child support. These changes should make child support easier to administer and empower states to integrate the collection and distribution of child support with their own welfare reform strategies.

I strongly support H.R. 4678, the Child Support Distribution Act and urge my colleagues to do the same.

IN HONOR OF ARMANDO
TALAVERA, WADO RADIO
SPORTS COMMENTATOR

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 11, 2000

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Armando Talavera for his career as a sports commentator, covering Major League Baseball for Spanish language radio.

Mr. Talavera was born in Caracas, Venezuela. He currently lives in Queens, New York, with his wife, Linda, and his two children, Carlos and Adrienne.

He began his career as a sports commentator in 1972, and has covered the All Star Game and World Series since 1975. He has also covered New York Mets and Yankees baseball, the NBA finals, the past 11 Super Bowls, Major League Soccer, the World Cup, and the Caribbean World Series.

Because of his exceptional abilities, Mr. Talavera was hired by WADO Radio (1280 AM) in 1993, and has been an integral part of the station ever since. He covered sporting events initially, and later was the host of a four-hour talk show called "WADO Deportivo."

For his contributions to journalism, and for his service to Hispanic Americans, I commend Mr. Talavera. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring him today.

CELEBRATING THE 35TH YEAR OF
THE JERRY LEWIS MUSCULAR
DYSTROPHY TELETHON

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 11, 2000

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer praise today for a man with whom I am proud to share a name, a man who has shown the world for 35 years that Americans will rally in huge numbers to help those in need. I am speaking, of course, of my friend Jerry Lewis, the consummate entertainer, and his world-renowned telethon for the Muscular Dystrophy Association.

Since 1965, Jerry Lewis has taken to the airwaves to raise funds to fight neuromuscular disease, setting a standard for fund-raising that has become a part of our culture. In the 2000 version of the event on September 3-4, Lewis and his "Jerry's Kids" and a multitude of entertainers raised a record \$54.1 million in pledges. The MDA will operate 183 offices and research centers nationwide with these and other private donations—the organization does not request or receive government funding.

The diseases combated by Jerry Lewis and MDA—40 of them, including "Lou Gehrig's disease" and myasthenia gravis—affect tens of thousands of people throughout the United

States. The MDA efforts can be found nationwide as well. I am proud to say the Loma Linda University Medical Center in my district has one of two Southern California clinics that serve 1,500 adults and children.

The donations raised by Jerry Lewis for the MDA go much further than treating these diseases. Researchers funded by MDA have discovered a gene that controls one form of neuromuscular illness, and are now conducting tests on what forms of gene therapy might be possible.

It is also through these donations that thousands of children each year can get out of their treatment rooms and go to summer camp, where they enjoy horse-back riding, canoeing and other activities. At one of those camps, in Big Bear Lake in the San Bernardino Mountains in my district, children who spend nearly all of their energy fighting neuromuscular disease can enjoy the great outdoors because MDA is able to pay for a counselor for every camper.

Because he has been a sentimental success for three decades, and because he is very open with his thoughts and emotions, my good friend Jerry Lewis has often not been given the respect he deserves by the national media. But in cities and towns across the country young people, civic groups and many volunteers worked hard to help him make this year's telethon a great success. They know that he is a hero who is dedicated to saving millions of lives.

Mr. Speaker, it is always a delight when I pick up the telephone and hear a buoyant voice say "This is Jerry Lewis, how are you doing?" I enjoy telling tourists who peer into my office: "Of course, I'm the real Jerry Lewis." Sharing a name with someone who gives so much to help millions overcome disease is indeed an honor, and I urge my colleagues to honor this American institution by expressing our gratitude for his efforts.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF AMERICAN
LEGION AUXILIARY UNIT 57

HON. DAVID MINGE

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 11, 2000

Mr. MINGE. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to recognize the 75th anniversary of the American Legion Auxiliary Unit 57 of Chaska, MN, and its remarkable contribution to supporting our Nation's veterans.

This distinguished unit was chartered in 1925 with 40 charter members. It has since grown to 225 members in 2000, including one Gold Star Mother. What is most amazing about this organization is that they have 13 members who each have over 50 years of service. This totals to over 650 years of membership and dedication.

The unit provides outstanding service to area veterans through several fund-raising events and social activities. They host porkchop dinners for the Carver County Veterans' Van Fund and participate in the Poppy Program which benefits veterans locally and nationally. They also hold bingo socials for residents of the Hastings Minnesota Veterans Home.