

was shot several times and most of the men in his battalion were killed. However, John survived that terrible time period and was decorated for his service in the conflict. In total, John was awarded two Purple Hearts, the Silver Star for gallantry in action, the Bronze Star, and the Army Commendation Medal. John's actions truly keep with the highest traditions of military service.

Mr. Speaker, life after Vietnam brought many things to many individuals. For John Steer, it brought a calling to God and continued service to veterans across our nation. Today, as a Christian evangelist and minister, John Steer speaks to groups across the nation about his experiences and how to make the most out of life. As the founder of Living Word Christian Ministries, John and his wife, Donna, were recognized by President George Bush at the 682nd Presidential Point of Life for operating Fort Steer—a refuge for addicted and traumatized veterans.

John Steer is also a nationally known artist, author, songwriter, speaker, and recording star. He has written several books about his service in Vietnam and has recorded fourteen country-style gospel and patriotic albums. He performed in front of more than 50,000 people at the dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC. In 1999, John won three awards by the North American Country Music Association International, including Male Vocalist of the Year for traditional gospel music and Patriotic Song of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, the men and women who serve in the United States armed forces unselfishly put their lives on the line to protect the banner of freedom that we enjoy as Americans. Veterans, like John Steer, prove that sacrifice is difficult, but continuing with life is truly rewarding for oneself and those one touches. It is often said that America prospers due to the unselfish acts of her sons and daughters. John's dedicated service in Vietnam and his current efforts as a minister, author, and artist are a glowing example of how proud all Americans should be of our veterans. I would urge my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to John L. Steer—a true American hero.

HONORING MIKE WILSON OF
NILES, OHIO

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, today, I want to congratulate Mike Wilson of Niles, Ohio for being chosen as this year's "Gary Komarow Memorial Executive Officer Of The Year Award" winner. Mike is a valuable part of our community and I would like to extend my congratulations and thanks to him for all of his hard work. The following news article describes the award:

SAVANNAH, GA—Mike Wilson, executive officer of the Mahoning Valley Home Builders Association, received the "Gary Komarow Memorial Executive Officer Of The Year Award" at the national HBA conference in Savannah, GA.

The Niles resident was selected out of 700 local, state, and province HBA organizational executive officers in the United States and Canada.

The award recognizes the actions, commitments, and practices that have assisted the advancement of the nominee's association, industry and community.

UNIFORM TESTING FOR
NEWBORNS

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, it's a distinct pleasure for me to join today with Congressman PALLONE in introducing legislation to help achieve full screening of newborns for health disorders.

Mothers are familiar with the "heel and prick" test, but few know how many diseases the hospital is testing. Many hospitals test for 2 or 3, the March of Dimes recommends 8 disorders as a core group for uniform screening, but the technology exists to screen for more than 30 life-altering conditions. There is no reason not to have full and uniform screening for the four million infants born nationwide every year. Right now, it's a piecemeal approach, with different states testing at different levels.

Backed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the same drops of blood can provide full screening for disorders at the cost of about \$25 a baby.

This issue was first brought to my attention a couple months ago by a Mother from Somerset County in the area I represent. She points to specific families such as the New Mexico couple that had two infants die from VLCAD that weren't tested for the disorder; a Texas couple whose son has brain damage from GA1, not on the tested list; or my constituent's grandson who could have been brain damaged or dead because MCAD is not tested uniformly. Against the measure of these illnesses and the impact on infants and families, surely we can devote the \$25 to full testing.

Our bill would establish a grant system to be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services to help states and localities implement full testing.

To me, one of the great overlooked issues in the health care debate is the 11 million children in our Nation with no health care insurance. No child should suffer because of a lack of health care, and no child and family should suffer because we don't commit to doing the full testing we can to head off debilitating diseases. Let's pass this legislation and make sure that newborns get the full screening they need and deserve.

FHA SHUTDOWN PREVENTION ACT

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 21, 2000

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation designed to prevent future

shutdowns of FHA specialty lending programs. The "FHA Shutdown Prevention Act" provides standby legal authority for HUD to keep FHA loan programs under the so-called GI/SRI Funds operating in the event they run out of required credit subsidy.

GI/SRI programs are all FHA loans, except the core single family MMIF loans. In late July of 2000, HUD was forced to shut down a number of specialty FHA loan programs, included in the GRI/SI account. These include the reverse mortgage program, condominium loans, Title 1 property improvement loans, and various multi-family loans.

The cause of the shutdown was that HUD had run out of credit subsidy required under law to keep making these loans, and Congress had failed to pass emergency legislation needed to provide additional credit subsidy. Though many of us have been calling on Congress to act to restore lending authority for these programs, the difficulty of finding a suitable spending bill to attach this to is easier said than done. In fact, just yesterday, the Senate rejected the Treasury-Postal appropriations bill, which had contained the necessary credit subsidy to restart these programs.

These developments and yesterday's failure all illustrate that the current system is not working. The answer is that we should give HUD the standby legal authority to continue these programs, even when they run out of credit subsidy. This will not undercut the Credit Reform Act; appropriators will still have to appropriate the necessary credit subsidy each year (or if not, will still be scored as having appropriated such amount). But this bill merely provides a backstop in case our projections are inaccurate.

The irrationality of the current system is underscored by the fact that the combined FHA GI-SRI funds actually make a net profit for the government. For FY 2001, FHA is projected to have 6 GI/SRI Fund loan programs which are projected to generate a positive credit subsidy—that is, they are projected to generate a cumulative loss of \$101 million. For FY 2001, FHA is projected to have 16 GI/SRI Fund loan programs which are projected to generate a negative credit subsidy—that is, they are projected to generate a cumulative profit of \$122 million.

Thus, the 22 FHA GI/SRI Fund loan programs are projected to make a net profit of \$21 million. In spite of this, the six programs projected to run a loss would be unable to continue at any point that they run out of credit subsidy—even if the combined fund continues to run a profit. This does not make sense. My legislation recognizes this reality, in effect allowing profit-making loan programs to pay for money-losing programs in the event there is a shortfall.

I urge the appropriations committee to adopt this approach for the next fiscal year. When it comes to unnecessary shutdowns of FHA loan programs, we should make certain we never find ourselves in this position again.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "FHA Shutdown Prevention Act".