Growing up, I learned about two countries called Germany—the West and the East—an ally and an enemy. For over 40 years, this country was divided; families were separated, and most strikingly, vastly different political ideologies governed these two nations.

However, the highly dynamic 20th Century allowed the generation which witnessed the division of this great nation see it reunified on October 3, 1990. What once seemed impossible became unstoppable as the Berlin Wall opened on November 9, 1989, and streams of excited people crossed into the west. While these people were separated by geography and government, their German heritage and common memory of one country kept them together.

While the desire to reunite these two nations was strong, significant economic, political, and social challenges faced the newly united Germany. Despite these issues, the German government and her people pressed forward, refusing to look back.

Today, Germany has much to celebrate. Now united, this country has defined itself, both as a sovereign nation, and within the context of multinational institutions such as the European Union, NATO, and the United States. In addition, Germany has remained a strong ally of the United States.

As Germany celebrates the realization of freedom and democracy under one flag, let this Congress recognize and offer its congratulations on this milestone of achievement, the 10th Anniversary of German Reunification.

A TRIBUTE TO THE GERMAN SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 3, 2000

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I honor the German Society of Pennsylvania. Founded in 1764, it is the oldest German American organization in the new world. In celebration of its founding, the Society will hold its 236th Anniversary Ball and its annual German American Day festivities.

The first German immigrants came to the new world after being invited by William Penn to come to his colony. Ultimately, thirteen families settled in what became known as Germantown, one of Philadelphia's oldest sections of the city. These families left their homes in the Rhineland City of Krefeld and arrived in Philadelphia on October 6, 1683, a date celebrated by German Americans as the beginning of their history in the United States.

The flow of German immigrants continued and the poorest of them suffered many hardships and cruelty. As a result the Society was founded, for the express purpose of aiding these distressed immigrants. And, because of the Society's advocacy a series of measures to protect immigrants were enacted.

Today, the Society maintains its presence in the First Congressional District in its historic 1888 landmark building, which is on the national list of historic places. The Society also continues to steadfastly fulfill its mission to serve its members and those who share interests in German and German American culture, heritage and values through its presentations of educational lectures, cultural and arts programs, and seminars.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOSEPH M. HOEFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 3, 2000

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, last night I missed the first vote (#503) which authorized a Privacy Commission. I was unavoidably detained on a train from Philadelphia which was late in arriving. If present, I would have voted ''nay'' on the motion.

REVIEW BY CONGRESS OF PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF COURT FACILITIES—H.R. 5363

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 3, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to provide for the review by Congress of proposed construction of court facilities, H.R. 5363.

I am introducing this measure in response to my experience with a proposed Federal courthouse project for Orange County, New York.

In April of this year, the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit voted to rescind its prior 1992 approval for construction of a Federal courthouse in Orange County, New York.

This project began in 1991, when then Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court of the Southern District of New York the honorable Charles L. Brient, requested the board of judges to study future planning for court facilities west of the Hudson River. Subsequently, on June 1992, the board of judges of the southern district found that there was a need for a courthouse to meet the growing demands in the mid-Hudson Valley Region of New York, and voted unanimously to authorize the chief judge to apply to the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit for approval of a Federal District Courthouse west of the Hudson.

Following approval of the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit on July 28, 1992, the matter was referred to the court administration and case management committee of the judicial conference of the United States. The committee reported favorably and voted unanimously in a March 1993 session of the judicial conference of the United States to ''seek legislation on the court's behalf to amend title 28 of the U.S. Code, section 112(b) to establish a place for holding court in the Middletown/Wallkill area of Orange County or such nearby location as may be deemed appropriate.''

Accordingly, during the 104th Congress, Public Law 104–317 was approved designating that ''court for the southern district shall be held at New York, White Plains, and in Middletown-Wallkill area of Orange County or such nearby location as may be appropriate.''

In an attempt to proceed forward in an expeditious matter the administrative office of the courts and the U.S. General Services Administration, both concurring with the need for a courthouse in Orange County, determined that a facility could and should be constructed and paid through GSA's current funding.

This project had and still has clear evidence denoting the growth in population and economic activity in Dutchess, Orange, and Sullivan County in New York, as well as steady increases in caseload from the mid-Hudson Valley region. In fact, current statistics suggests that the need is even greater now than previously ascertained by Congress in 1996. The number of cases in 1999 that could have gone to an Orange County Courthouse, based on the location of the litigants or the attorney's residence, increased to 312, up from 290 in 1996. Moreover, the population for the region has increased to 671,767, up from 656,740 in 1996 and the total labor force has risen to 309,100 up from 301,800 in 1996.

Furthermore, it should be noted that while Congress may have acquiesced in the closure of some courthouses which have become redundant, based on considerations of economy and efficiency, I know of no situation where a court has refused to provide judicial services at a location designated by statute, where both the need exists and there is strong local support for the service. Such was and still is clearly the case with regard to the Orange County project.

Accordingly, while it is now current practice, as denoted by title 28 of the U.S. Code, for the U.S. Administrative Office of the Courts and the GSA to develop a rolling five year plan denoting the need for courthouse construction, I believe it is important for Congress to have a say in this important matter.

The legislation I introduced today will require the director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts to submit for approval to the Congress a report setting forth the courts plans for proposed construction. Congress will have 30 legislative days to disapprove of the proposed construction.

It has become apparent to me after the experience I have had with both the Board of Judges of the southern district and the Judicial Council of the Second Circuit that an imperialistic attitude among many of our Federal judges prevail.

The decision as to whether or not to move forward with construction of a court facility is no longer based on existing evidence and data showing the need, but instead on the personal thoughts of the judges involved.

This legislation will end that practice. Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 5363.

H.R. 5363

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

SECTION 1. CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF NEW CONSTRUCTION FOR FEDERAL COURTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 462 of title 28, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

''(g)(1) Facilities for holding court may not be constructed unless—

''(A) the Director of the Administrative Office of the United States Courts submits to