

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BOB RILEY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Mr. RILEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for rollcall No. 519, S. 2438, the Pipeline Safety Act. Had I been present I would have voted "yea." Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for rollcall No. 520, H.R. 208, to allow for the contribution of certain rollover distributions to accounts in the Thrift Savings Plan, and to eliminate certain waiting-period requirements for participating in the Thrift Savings Plan. Had I been present I would have voted "yea." Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained for rollcall No. 521, H.R. 762, Lupus Research and Care amendments. Had I been present I would have voted "yea."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CASS BALLENGER

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, October 6, I missed rollcall vote 516, final passage of the FY 2001 Transportation appropriations conference report (H.R. 4475). Had I been present, I would have voted "yea". I also missed rollcall vote 517, the rule for H.R. 3244, the Sexual Trafficking Victims Protection Act, and rollcall 518, final passage of H.R. 3244. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both.

RECOGNITION OF JAMES G. MILLS, THE NEWLY ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD FOR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FEDERAL CREDIT UNIONS

HON. MARK E. SOUDER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize James G. Mills of Fort Wayne, Indiana in my district for his recent election as chairman of the board for the National Association of Federal Credit Unions. Mr. Mills was elected on June 17, 2000 and officially took over in late July.

In 1985, Mr. Mills joined Three Rivers Federal Credit Union as president and chief executive officer. Three Rivers provides important options for my constituents and as such has been an asset to Northeast Indiana. Between 1985 and 1995, the number of branches increased from one to eight with the number of member companies increasing from 125 to more than 700. Individual membership soared from 15,000 to 65,000 plus.

Along the way, Mr. Mills worked to promote the growth of the community as well as the Credit Union. In 1995, Three Rivers FCU was able to secure Indiana's first Community Development Credit Union Expansion Charter to

open the field of membership and provide financial services to less served parts of the community. This innovation was the result of his near two-years of work with local city officials, the economic development offices of Fort Wayne, and the National Credit Union Administration. Most recently, Mr. Mills facilitated an initiative in the area of inner city financial literacy training for an under-served group that also happens to be a new part of the FCU's field of membership. I strongly commend him for his efforts to empower those who are less economically advantaged through knowledge and the broadening of financial services.

In the role of Chairman of NAFCU, Mr. Mills will be leading the trade association that represents federal credit unions. I look forward to working with him and America's credit unions as we work to benefit families and communities, and congratulate him on this national recognition.

TRIBUTE TO RABBI RICHARD HAMMERMAN

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Rabbi Richard Hammerman of Congregation B'Nai Israel, Toms River, New Jersey, who is celebrating his 25th year with the synagogue.

Much of B'Nai Israel's vibrancy and outreach comes from the influence of Rabbi Hammerman, who came to B'Nai Israel in 1975. He is credited by many as the driving force which helped make the synagogue as it is today.

Through the years, the congregation has enjoyed many additions and accomplishments, among them the memorial to the victims of the Holocaust, the stained glass windows depicting scenes from Israel, and the synagogue expansion in 1983. Despite difficulties during the early days, the congregation persevered, and today it is an active member of both the Jewish community and the community at large, including a thriving Talmud Torah which sends all Hebrew high school graduates to Israel, participates in community programs to provide moderate housing, and in an interfaith group to help house the homeless.

Rabbi Hammerman is described as a "real mensch," a person who genuinely cares about each member of the congregation. He is considered a man of the highest ethics, one who is warm and welcoming.

Having grown from 225 members upon Rabbi Hammerman's arrival to its current membership of 500, his warmth and caring are cited as the strength behind the success of Congregation B'Nai Israel, and for the respect the congregation has earned from the community.

May Rabbi Richard Hammerman, Rabbi of Congregation B'Nai Israel, continue to serve the community for many years to come.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF STEWART MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. JOSEPH M. HOEFFEL

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Stewart Middle School of Norristown, Pennsylvania on their 75th Anniversary. On September 8, 1925, Stewart Junior High opened its doors to 916 pupils and has been a model of academic excellence for the past 75 years.

The current Stewart Middle School was the first junior high school in the Norristown School District and currently enrolls more than 650 students from diverse backgrounds. In 1926, the first Student Council was established and continues to provide real leadership and community involvement for the students.

In 1981, Stewart was selected as one of only two schools statewide to participate in the Pennsylvania Department of Education's School Climate Improvement Project and has been recognized by the PDE and the Senate of Pennsylvania for its efforts to improve mathematics and reading scores. As an advocate of combining academic and special area instruction, Stewart Middle School applies a "school within a school" concept to learning. This allows students to learn in smaller classes with an emphasis on group learning. Stewart should serve as a model for schools throughout the country.

I am pleased to celebrate this momentous occasion with the Stewart Middle School community. They have much to be proud of during their first 75 years and I expect even more accomplishments to come.

IN CELEBRATION OF ITALIAN FESTA AND THE ITALIAN-AMERICAN FEDERATION OF THE EAST BAY, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 11, 2000

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the Italian-American Federation of the East Bay, for its presentation of the 9th Annual Italian Festa, which took place on September 16 and 17, 2000, at Jack London Square in Oakland, California.

Italian Festa is one of the largest celebrations of Italian heritage and culture on the West Coast. This year's visitors listened to accordion, opera and other traditional Italian music, while watching costumed dancers perform. Visitors were also treated to a demonstration by Tony Gemignani, the "World Pizza Toss King" and a food demonstration with Andy LoRusso, "the Singing Chef."

A photographic display detailing the Italian legacy in the California gold fields provided a fascinating local history lesson for visitors. "Nostra Storia—The Italian Legacy in the Mother Lode" tells the story of one of the earliest and most important, but often unrecognized, groups of people to settle in the California foothills of the Sierra Nevada.

In the tradition of Italian street festivals, Italian Festa provided a great selection of Italian specialties such as sausage and peppers, biscotti, polenta, Sicilian pastries, hand-made ice cream, tortas and cannoli. The food was prepared in the kitchen of the East Bay's Social Clubs, which donate a portion of the profits from beverage sales to a scholarship foundation for Italian-American Students.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Italian-American Federation of the East Bay for its efforts to celebrate Italian and Italian-American culture and history. On behalf of the residents of the 9th Congressional District, I congratulate the Foundation on the great success of the 9th Annual Italian Festa, and wish the organization luck in continuing to educate the community about Italian heritage and culture for years to come.

EXPRESSING SORROW OF THE
HOUSE AT THE DEATH OF THE
HONORABLE BRUCE VENTO,
MEMBER OF CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 10, 2000

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor my colleague, Congressman Bruce F. Vento, who passed away on Tuesday, October 10, 2000, at the age of 60, after 23 years of dedicated service as the Representative from Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District.

Congressman Vento was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1977. Over the course of his 12 remarkable terms in office, Congressman Vento has taken a leadership role on environmental, housing and banking reform issues. As chairman of the Natural Resources Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands for over 10 years the Congressman was enormously successful in protecting hundreds of thousands of acreage from Minnesota to Alaska and American Samoa. Through his role as ranking member on the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit, he has worked tirelessly to modernize our financial services industry while continuing to safeguard consumer privacy. Finally, as an active, vocal member of the Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee, Congressman Vento will always be remembered for his admirable fight to end homelessness in America. The most fitting tribute that we, his colleagues, can pay Congressman Vento is to follow in his footsteps and continue his commendable work on behalf of the environment, the homeless, and banking reform.

Madam Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I ask my fellow colleagues to join me in remembering one of our own, the Honorable Bruce F. Vento. He will be sorely missed by myself and all members of this House. I also wish to take this opportunity to extend my deepest sympathy to his family and friends during this difficult time.

RYAN WHITE CARE ACT
AMENDMENTS OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. KAREN MCCARTHY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 10, 2000

Ms. McCARTHY of Missouri. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support and as a co-sponsor of the Ryan White CARE Act, which is a life-saving piece of legislation. Persons with HIV/AIDS deserve the medical support services provided through the grants and programs included in this measure. Although the rate of HIV infection per year is decreasing in America, there are still over 40,000 new infections per year. We must continue our national efforts to prevent future transmissions and improve the quality of life for those living with AIDS.

To date, the Ryan White Care Act has helped provide the latest drug therapy to more than 100,000 poor people, reduced AIDS mortality by seventy percent, and decreased mother-to-child transmission of HIV by seventy percent. It is clear that this legislation is successful, and I believe the measure before us strengthens our national assault on this disease.

My home state of Missouri received over \$15 million dollars for FY 1998 under the Ryan White CARE Act. These funds have helped those living with HIV or AIDS, through investments in medication and vital support services. The legislation before us today contains a provision on partner notification, which I believe is essential to decreasing the spread of HIV and reducing the transmission of all sexually transmitted diseases. I am concerned with the racial disparities in the incidence of HIV infection in Missouri, and specifically in Kansas City. This measure will hopefully make strides in reducing the incidence of HIV in both minority communities as well as among women and youth, who are especially vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in full support of passage of the Ryan White CARE Act. Our support sends a message that HIV/AIDS is a fully recognized public health problem, and has our commitment to protect all vulnerable persons from this devastating disease.

PIPELINE SAFETY IMPROVEMENT
ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 10, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 2438, the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act. Almost all Members agree that S. 2438 significantly increases government safety regulation in the safest sector of America's transportation industry. I commend the Senate for swiftly and overwhelmingly passing this legislation, making pipeline safety legislation up to the House.

I would like to begin with the safety record in the pipeline industry. According to Office of Pipeline Safety statistics, 76 unforgettable, tragic fatalities were reported for liquid and gas pipeline accidents from 1986 to 1999. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics, 10,772 equally tragic fatalities resulted from accidents involving large trucks in 1997 and 1998 alone. One could easily say that the current pipeline transportation system, which transports explosive, hazardous materials, is hundreds of times safer than the transportation system that carries the large majority of America's economic output. However, everyone knows a "good" safety record is not enough. We must always keep working to improve the status quo.

Some of my colleagues will argue that this is an "industry bill" and is actually a fake. I respect their desire to appear independent, but I strongly disagree. Clearly the U.S. Senate, including many particularly independent Senators, feels that this bill significantly increases public safety. The bill strengthens reporting by a factor of 420. Spills over 2,100 gallons are reported now, spills over 5 gallons would be reported under S. 2438. The bill increases daily fines by a factor of 20 (\$25K to \$500K). The pipeline industry is part of the fundamental energy base of our economy and has a strong safety record overall. It would be unwise and unjust to disproportionately attack an industry that is vital to the economy and significantly safer than the predominate mode of transportation.

Mr. Speaker, for those concerned with pipeline inspection, I would like to remind them that S. 2438 will provide much needed momentum for the issuance of DOT mandatory testing requirements, and sets a deadline of December 31, 2001. The bill authorizes funds to develop and implement these regulations. If S. 2438 is passed and signed, every interstate pipeline operator will be required to submit a detailed, integrated safety program to the DOT. The bill also provides for research and development into new inspection techniques.

In summary, this bill provides higher standards, stiffer enforcement, and authorizes over \$170 million to make it possible. The bill is supported by the Secretary of Transportation, the U.S. Senate, and a large bipartisan group of my colleagues.

I sympathize with the opposition to this bill. However, in this diverse body, we must sometimes accept imperfect legislation without as much opportunity for input as we would like. I believe that this bill is a large step in the right direction on pipeline safety. I also believe that this bill does not place the blame for accidents on individual employees. Section 14, "Operator Assistance in Investigations", allows the DOT to direct the suspension of an employee that directly and substantially contributed to an accident. The employee may return to work if they are later cleared of blame or are retrained. The legislation does not state that an employee on the scene is culpable or an automatic suspect.

This is our last chance to improve public pipeline safety this year. Do not wait for further accidents to move on this issue. I urge all my colleagues to support the improvement of pipeline safety.