

Denise and Kyle Marx are parents of Nicholas, a ten-year-old boy with Angelman's Syndrome. Those familiar with special needs children know the demands, but also the tremendous blessings that Nicholas has bestowed on his family. Due to recent events, the need to better understand and treat this disorder has become obvious. Today, Nicolas is in a coma and has only a few months to live after being administered medication that caused an allergic reaction. This happened, in part, because those with Angelman's Syndrome are unable to communicate pain or discomfort and Nicolas was powerless to express the effects that the medication was having on his body. Today, I am asking Congress to make efforts to provide for research so that Angelman's Syndrome can be better understood and treated more effectively.

Angelman's Syndrome is a genetic disorder usually caused by a small deletion of molecules on the long arm of the fifteenth chromosome. In some rare cases, Angelman's can also be caused when a child inherits both long arms of the fifteenth chromosome from the father. The effects of this disease include speech impairment, with minimal or almost no use of words, movement and balance disorder, including a stiff gait and tremulous movement of the limbs, behavioral uniqueness, including excitability, frequent laughter and smiling, flapping movements, and a short attention span. More than 80% of people with Angelman's Syndrome have a delayed or disproportionately slow growth in head circumference and seizures that begin around the age of three. Many other cases include symptoms such as hypopigmentation of the skin and eyes, sucking and swallowing disorders, wide mouth, hyperactive tendon reflexes, sensitivity to heat, and sleep disturbances.

One of the most difficult aspects of Angelman's Syndrome is that the disease is usually not recognized at birth. Diagnosis often does not occur until the child is between the ages of three and seven, when the characteristics become evident. Those with Angelman's Syndrome are born with a normal prenatal history and no major birth defects.

It was only 35 years ago that Dr. Harry Angelman, an English physician, diagnosed Angelman's Syndrome for the first time. The first reports of the disease in North America did not begin to appear until the 1980's. Until very recently, many doctors considered Angelman's Syndrome to be extremely rare and some even doubted its existence. Thankfully, through the Human Genome Project, we have been able to gain a better understanding of this disease. However, we still have a long way to go until we fully understand Angelman's Syndrome.

While we now know that Angelman's Syndrome affects anywhere between 1 in 10,000 and 1 in 30,000, we still have much to learn about the disease and its symptoms. Angelman's Syndrome is only diagnosed through genetic laboratory testing. However, it is often misdiagnosed and mistaken for autism. We need to work toward a better and more comprehensive understanding of the disease, its causes, and the best way to treat it. It is my hope that through research, we can come to understand and effectively treat Angelman's Syndrome and that the medical

community will develop guidelines for treating patients with these conditions.

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IN RECOGNITION OF JAMES FORSYTH—AN EXEMPLARY ACTIVIST

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**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2000*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in paying recognition to a true progressive activist, Jim Forsyth. As Jim continues to fight tirelessly for labor, the environment, housing, seniors, and civil rights, he is an ever-present voice speaking out wherever there is injustice or human need.

Jim was born on July 14, 1927, Bastille Day in Brooklyn, New York. After graduating from Williams College, where he joined the progressive movement, Jim came to California's Bay Area to work on the assembly line in General Motors. Jim and his late wife Fran were the dutiful parents of five children.

Jim is a member of several progressive groups and organizations. He is proud to have been a part of the pro-union group, the Plant Closure Project. Jim is secretary of the South Hayward Parish and was in charge of food distribution at the Parish for ten years. He distributed food every Saturday morning and most Wednesday. He is currently secretary of the Congress for Seniors handling mailing and developing flyers—many times at his own expense. Jim also lends his expertise to the California Consumers Health Care Council and the Californians for Justice. In 1967, Jim founded the Progressive Hayward Demos Democratic Club and is the current newsletter editor. His other memberships include the Starr King Universal Unitarian Church, the Federation of Retired Union Members, and Vote Health.

Jim has been a long-time opponent of war as a means of solving economic or social problems. He began by speaking out against the Korean War and continued with the Vietnam War when Jim, Fran, and their children marched in numerous protests.

In all of these groups and activities for elections and social change, Jim Forsyth works tirelessly, willingly, and with enthusiasm. He is proud of his work. This is his life and his recreation. He feels responsible for attempting to make the world a better place for working people.

Jim's friends and colleagues will honor his work on October 19, 2000 at a public ceremony. I join his friends and admirers in thanking him for his years of service and I am proud that he has been my friend for several years.

HONORING MILT AND BETTE DOBKIN, HUMBOLDT COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

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**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2000*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Milt and Bette Dobkin, two extraordinary citizens of Humboldt County, CA, who have dedicated their lives to public service. They are being honored for their life-long contribution to one of the Nation's most precious rights—participation in the political system. Their actions on behalf of Representative Democracy are worthy of appreciation and recognition.

Bette Dobkin has taken on many roles throughout her years of service to the community. She has been an elementary school teacher, school board member, grand juror, and human rights, housing, and elections commissioner. She currently serves on the board of the Arcata Community Recycling Center and the North Coast Repertory Theater. In her career, she has brought distinction and honor to her profession. Bette has been selected as the "Realtor of the Year" by the Humboldt County Board of Realtors and selected as "Honorary Director for Life" by the California Association of Realtors.

Milt Dobkin has been a recognized leader of higher education in our community for many years. He served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at Humboldt State University for 14 years before retiring. He is Professor Emeritus of Communication Studies and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Emeritus. Milt has served on many local board, including the Humboldt Arts Council, Dell'Arte, Redwood Arts Council, and Humboldt Child Care Council. He is currently an elected member of the Redwoods Community College District Board of Trustees, Chairman of the Retired Public Employees Association and ably serves the California Faculty Association.

Both Milt and Bette Dobkin are being recognized this year for their outstanding contribution to the political process by the Humboldt County Democratic Central Committee as the "Democrats of the Year, 2000."

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we recognize Milt and Bette Dobkin for their unwavering commitment and compassion, and for their contribution to the ideals and traditions that have made America great.

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TRIBUTE TO WORKING WARDROBES

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**HON. LORETTA SANCHEZ**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, October 17, 2000*

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker: Today, I rise to pay tribute to one of Orange County's outstanding community service groups, Working Wardrobes. Working Wardrobes is dedicated to assisting survivors of domestic violence achieve self-sufficiency in their lives.

Working Wardrobes began in 1990 when six Orange County business women decided to