

will suggest our initial charges were without merit. If that is the case, those who made them should be asked to account for their statements.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I was in New York, and unable to be present for the following votes, had I been present I would have voted as follows:

October 24: rollcall No. 541, "no"; rollcall No. 542 "yes"; rollcall No. 543, "no".

October 25: rollcall No. 544, "yes"; rollcall No. 545, "no"; rollcall No. 546, "yes"; rollcall No. 547, "yes"; rollcall No. 548, "yes"; rollcall No. 549, "yes"; rollcall No. 550, "yes"; rollcall No. 551, "no"; rollcall No. 552, "yes".

October 26: rollcall No. 553, "no"; rollcall No. 554, "yes"; rollcall No. 555, "no"; rollcall No. 556, "no".

THE HERITAGE OF
NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the industrial and cultural coal-mining heritage of Northeastern Pennsylvania.

This Congress recently passed legislation to create the Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area in Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna and Wayne counties in Pennsylvania, and the President signed it into law on October 6. Together with the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and the Schuylkill National Heritage Corridor, this designation honors the coal-mining heritage of the people of the region and their contribution to powering the industrial Revolution and helping the United States win two world wars.

For the benefit of other members of the House of Representatives who may not be familiar with this rich heritage and its legacy, I would now like to read into the RECORD a short statement composed by a friend of mine, Mr. Richard Morgan of Shamokin, Pennsylvania.

Northeastern Pennsylvania has been well blessed with quality people. Thousands of immigrants came to our section of Pennsylvania from the world over.

Our neighbors became blended together as one. We came to share our lives in a manner that was beyond the belief of outsiders, who had never experienced the unique joy we found in each other. The rich cultural fabric that resulted is second to none.

The severe economic conditions that have been present for generations in the hard coal regions, have caused most of our sons and daughters to spread themselves, their talents, and their deeply ingrained coal cracker lifestyles far and wide across America.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Other communities throughout America have benefited by our loss. Our young people were the greatest gifts we had to give our country, even greater than the Anthracite natural resource that was stripped from our region to provide fuel and energy for the Industrial Revolution.

We who remain in the region, are proud of the achievements of those who have left us for greener fields, green fields that are no longer to be found in the old hometowns, and around the half-doubles they reluctantly left behind, but which they have never forgotten.

The sound moral values that they learned from their immigrant families, will remain with them forever, wherever they may come to hang their hats.

Mr. Speaker, in the closing days of this Congress, I would like to call to the attention of my colleagues not only the positive parts of the anthracite coal's legacy to Northeastern Pennsylvania, but also another part of the legacy that can still be seen today: the need for a comprehensive reclamation of the mine-scarred land.

The federal Office of Surface Mining has estimated that the restoration of all the land and water in the anthracite region would cost more than \$2 billion, but until this year, the anthracite region has received only about \$10 million annually from the federal government to restore abandoned mine lands. At that level of funding, we will have a critical environmental problem in place for two centuries.

Let us not forget that this is fundamentally an issue of fairness. Pennsylvania anthracite coal fueled the Industrial Revolution that made America the superpower it is today. Unfortunately, the physical scars left by the Industrial Revolution of the 19th and 20th Centuries have decreased our competitiveness in the Information Age of the 21st Century. As Mr. Morgan eloquently points out, this has had the effect of forcing many of our young people to look elsewhere for opportunities.

In the same way that the federal government has made a commitment to restoring the Everglades in Florida, a similar comprehensive approach is needed to restore the anthracite region in Pennsylvania.

Restoring the anthracite region is also consistent with the growing consensus that it is better to clean up and reuse formerly polluted "brownfields" for industrial development than to wipe out more of America's disappearing "greenfields," the untouched open spaces that are so important to our quality of life.

For these reasons, joined by Congressmen SHERWOOD, HOLDEN and GEKAS, my three colleagues from Pennsylvania who represent the anthracite region, I have sponsored the Anthracite Region Redevelopment Act (H.R. 4314), to create a new bond program that would provide \$1.2 billion in 30-year tax-credit bonds to finance a comprehensive environmental cleanup of the region.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to hail from the hard-coal region of eastern Pennsylvania. As Mr. Morgan's statement illustrates well, in the richness of our cultural fabric, our work ethic and strong values, our love of country, in all these we are second to none.

October 28, 2000

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JAMES H. MALONEY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. MALONEY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I was not present during rollcall vote #551. Had I been present I would have voted "No."

Additionally, I was not present during rollcall vote #552. Had I been present I would have voted "yes."

THE GOVERNMENT PROGRAM
EVALUATION COMMISSION ACT

HON. BILL ARCHER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. ARCHER. Mr. Speaker, "We know from past experience how difficult it is to curb the momentum of expanding government activity and we know that this portends the continuation of levels of taxation higher than we all want to bear. We are trying to get this message across: we want to pause in this headlong rush toward even bigger government."—Wilbur Mills

The former statement made 32 years ago by my predecessor in the Ways and Means Committee, Chairman Wilbur Mills, continues to hold as much truth today as it ever did in 1969. Our federal surplus, and ensuing spending frenzy, have created an even greater urgency that we recognize the importance of a restrained and focused government.

Bloated federal agencies have increasingly taken more American taxpayer dollars and spent those dollars not wisely, but wastefully. Despite the good intentions of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, misuse of taxpayers' money climbs ahead at an alarming pace. The Results Act was intended to help Congress in its oversight obligations by requiring federal agencies to set goals and use performance measures for management and budgeting.

Now, even the budget process is careening out of control. The annual congressional budget resolution has all but been cast aside. Congress spends with abandon. Not only is the surplus at risk, the entire process is at risk. On the other side of the coin, waste, fraud, and abuse in the federal government has never been greater. Recently, the Subcommittee on Government Management, Information, and Technology found that \$65 billion has been wasted by the federal agencies of the executive branch, not to mention \$245 billion in overdue taxes owed to Washington. A recent IRS report showed an estimated \$7.8 billion in Earned Income Tax Credit claims for 1997 were erroneously paid.

It is for that reason I am reintroducing a bill put forth by my able predecessor, Chairman Wilbur Mills, which seeks to establish the Government Program Evaluation Commission. Such a Commission would be created on a bipartisan basis and composed of members from the private sector. The Commission