

Street revitalization project, which involved a complete rehabilitation of the New Horizon Apartments, an elderly affordable housing complex. He also played an integral role in securing the funding for the development of Shaws Supermarket at Dwight Place which has brought about an economic renaissance in the area. Alvis always brought the needs of his constituents to City Hall—ensuring that their voices were heard.

During his three term tenure on the Board of Aldermen Board, he chaired the Public Safety and Substance Abuse Committee as well as the Youth and Youth Services Committee. As a case manager with the New Haven Family Alliance, he worked with primarily high-risk adolescents with drug and alcohol problems. His career experiences brought an uncommon insight to these committees and he was able to communicate the specific issues which our young people face with a unique authority. Prior to his work at the New Haven Family Alliance, Alvis pursued a counseling career within the Connecticut Department of Corrections, counseling inmates with substance abuse problems and lectured on the Criminal Justice System at public schools and universities across Connecticut. He also started and facilitated a program entitled "Youth Reaching Out to Youth", a program that designed an environment where teens could counsel each other on the difficult issues which they faced each day.

In only 33 years of life, Alvis Brooker left an invaluable mark on our community. Behind the myriad of Aldermanic Citations and Mayoral Proclamations, there was a man who truly cared about his community. He was a leader in every sense of the word and will always be remembered for his unwavering commitment and tireless work on behalf of our children and families. He has certainly been an inspiration to all of us in the New Haven community and it was indeed a privilege to work with him and I am proud to have called him my friend.

It is with a heavy heart that I rise today to join his mother, Sallie, family, friends, colleagues, and the community he loved well to bid a fond farewell to my dear friend, Alvis Brooker. His strength and good heart will live on.

UPHOLDING DEMOCRACY IN
TAIWAN

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, in the spring of 1996, the People's Republic of China (PRC) conducted two guided missile tests north of Taiwan, in an effort to intimidate the voting populous. Fortunately, the people in Taiwan recognized this act of intimidation by the PRC and overwhelmingly elected Lee Teng-hui as their first freely elected president in China's 5,000-year history.

This year, on the eve of Taiwan's second presidential election, the People's Republic of China has once again renewed its militaristic intimidation tactics against Taiwan. On at least two occasions, Beijing leaders had made it

abundantly clear that it could invade Taiwan if Taiwan refused to engage in reunification talks. There is widespread concern throughout Taiwan, South Asia, and here in the United States that the PRC will continue its efforts to intimidate Taiwan. These attempts to destabilize Taiwan's healthy policy and economy would eventually lead to the surrender of Taiwan to mainland China.

I trust the voters in Taiwan will once again choose one of the three leading candidates as their president on March 18. It is vitally important that Taiwan's security not be compromised in any way. In the meantime, the goal of both governments should be increased dialog and a cooling of inflammatory rhetoric. Fear and instability will not serve the people of either Taiwan or the PRC, and it certainly will not serve the interest of the United States.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SOCIAL
SECURITY BENEFITS PROTEC-
TION ACT OF 2000

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill that is very important to me, to my constituents in Hawaii, and to the people of the United States of America—the Social Security Benefits Protection Act.

Under current law, the Social Security Administration does not pay benefits for the last month of life. It doesn't matter what day of the month the retiree dies. Even if a Social Security beneficiary dies on the very last day of the month, the surviving spouse or family members must send back the Social Security check for that month.

This is an unfair and heartless rule.

When a loved one dies, there are expenses that the family must take care of:

There are final bills to pay. There are utility bills that need to be paid. There is rent or a mortgage that must be taken care of, and oftentimes, there are final health expenses.

Companies will not cancel these bills for that final month of life. These expenses must still be paid. So why is Social Security telling the family that the final month of Social Security income must be returned? This money is needed for these expenses.

My bill corrects this unfair rule in a simple and straightforward way:

It says that if you die after the 15th of the month, your surviving spouse or the family estate will get the Social Security check for that full month.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me and support the Social Security Benefits Protection Act.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEPOSIT
INSURANCE FUNDS MERGER ACT
OF 2000

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, today I join my colleagues, the Chair of the Financial Institu-

tions Subcommittee of the Banking Committee, MARGE ROUKEMA, in introducing the Deposit Insurance Funds Merger Act of 2000. I would like to thank Congresswoman ROUKEMA for her leadership in putting forward this timely legislation.

I believe the merger of the Bank Insurance Fund (BIF) and Savings Association Insurance Fund (SAIF) is a matter of substantial public policy importance that should be addressed on its independent merits. A merger of the BIF and SAIF would clearly benefit the deposit insurance system by creating a single, more diversified fund that is less vulnerable to regional economic problems. In addition, a merger of the funds would more accurately reflect the reality of today's financial services industry, in which 46 percent of the SAIF deposits are held by commercial banks and FDIC-regulated state savings banks. In fact, the funds have lost their independent identities, and we should rationalize their structure. Both industries should support the change as bringing needed rationality and stability to the deposit insurance funds.

The merger of the funds is an issue that I therefore believe merits independent consideration and Congressional action in the near term.

I look forward to working closely with my colleagues on this very critical issue.

TRIBUTE TO LEE KANON ALPERT

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. BERMAN. Mr. Speaker, my colleague, Mr. SHERMAN, and I, today pay tribute to Lee Kanon Alpert, who has been selected to receive this year's prestigious Fernando Award for outstanding volunteerism. He will be honored Friday March 10, 2000 at the 41st Annual Special Recognition Dinner by the Board of Directors of the Fernando Award Foundation and his name will be placed alongside previous winners at the base of the magnificent bronze statue of "Fernando" which stands in the San Fernando Valley Civic Center.

The Fernando Award was created to honor individuals who have exemplified leadership, volunteerism and dedication. It is recognized as the leading award for civic accomplishment in the San Fernando Valley. The process by which selection is made each year includes extensive participation by community organizations and community leaders. This year that process has yielded a particularly worthy recipient.

Lee has been a practicing attorney for over 28 years. In his distinguished legal career, he has developed expertise in numerous areas of the law, including administrative and governmental relations, arbitration and mediation, family law and real estate transactions. Despite his extensive professional responsibilities, he has taken an active role in the community, serving on numerous boards and commissions, providing public commentary on