

March 9, 2000

A TRIBUTE IN HONOR OF ROBERT
G. MILES

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Robert G. Miles on his appointment as the new president and chief executive officer of Lutheran Child and Family Service of Michigan, a statewide social service organization. Bob is a public servant in the truest sense of the term. As anyone who has ever met Bob knows, he is a man who has devoted his life to helping Michigan's children and families to improve their own lives.

Since completing his distinguished academic career with an undergraduate degree from Concordia University and a Master of Science Degree in Exceptional Education from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Bob has been integrally involved in the community around him. He is a peer reviewer and team leader for the National Council on Accreditation of Services to Children and Families, the largest accrediting body for this work in North America. He is chairman of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's National Task Force on Children at Risk and Welfare Reform. He works closely with Bay City Public Schools, the Michigan Federation of Private Child and Family Agencies, and the Bay County Red Cross. In 1990, Bob was named Concordia University Alumnus of the Year. Additionally, he was appointed to the Michigan International Year of the Family Council by Governor Engler in 1994.

Now, Bob has the opportunity to bring his enormous talents to lead an organization he has been with for nearly 15 years, one that has a history deserving of such an impressive leader. Last year, Lutheran Child and Family Service of Michigan celebrated its 100th year, and the organization is stronger than ever, employing more than 250 people, caring for more than 500 children each day, and providing innumerable additional services to families and individuals through its 18 service sites. In 1999 alone, Lutheran Child and Family Services of Michigan impacted more than 9,000 lives through counseling, foster care placements, and adoption, among its many other programs.

Mr. Speaker, with countless statistics showing that Americans today are less involved in their communities than they once were, people like Bob Miles are among the most valuable resources our nation has to preserve the sanctity of our towns and neighborhoods. His contributions and efforts on behalf of Michigan's children and families are both legendary and tangible. They reflect the years of tireless commitment to preserving the vitality of the American family, and helping those who need it the most. Bob Miles has given selflessly of himself to better the lives of the people around him, and for that he deserves the highest of praise.

Bob has given so much to his community through the years, but it could not have been possible without the love and support of his family—including his wife Mary and their three children, Stephanie, Paul, and Nathan. As he

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undertakes his new position, I ask all my colleagues to join me in offering congratulations to Robert Miles, and extending our best wishes for continued success.

IN SUPPORT OF INTERNATIONAL SATELLITE REFORM

HON. PETER DEUTSCH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of international satellite reform, S. 376, the Open-Market Reorganization for the Betterment of International Telecommunications Act (ORBIT). I commend Chairman BLILEY and Congressmen MARKEY, DINGELL, OXLEY, and TAUZIN for their hard work in reaching a balanced compromise with Senate conferees. This bill has bipartisan support in the Congress and support from the United States commercial international satellite industry, as well as the largest U.S. users of international satellite services.

S. 376 will lead to more competition and eliminate the unfair market advantages long-held by intergovernmental treaty organizations. These entities have been dominant since the United States established an industry model in 1962 that relied on intergovernmental entities to provide commercial satellite services. Our 1962 Communications Satellite Act has been overtaken by amazing technological changes, which have created a vibrant private international satellite industry. We must assure that Intelsat and Inmarsat privatize in a manner that will put all industry players on an equal footing and not permit their intergovernmental legacy to distort competition.

Accordingly, ORBIT establishes explicit criteria for the privatization of Intelsat and Inmarsat. The FCC is directed to use these criteria in determining whether or not to allow the private successors and affiliates of Intelsat and Inmarsat access to the United States market. These criteria for judging and privatization, coupled with the market access restrictions if the criteria are not met, are very important to provide clear incentives to Intelsat, Inmarsat, and their spin-offs.

Intelsat, with its 143 member nations, is comprised largely of state telephone companies that control access to their national markets. They have a history of denying market access to U.S. companies that seek to compete with Intelsat. This bill will help open those markets. One of the provisions in S. 376 that is essential to this market-opening goal prohibits exclusive arrangements with foreign countries. It even-handedly prohibits any satellite operator serving the United States from enjoying the exclusive right to handle telecommunications traffic to or from the U.S. and any other country. The intent is to prevent a satellite operator from benefitting from exclusivity in any foreign market, no matter how it derives its exclusivity. Thus, all satellite operators will have a fair opportunity to provide global service.

I urge my colleagues to join in supporting this overdue reform of international satellite policy. This legislation will bring the full bene-

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fits of competition to consumers and it will begin to open access to foreign markets for United States companies.

HOMEOWNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES AND EDUCATORS ACT

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 9, 2000

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, today, along with a number of my colleagues, I will be introducing the "Homeownership Opportunities for Uniformed Services and Educators Act," also known as the HOUSE Act.

This legislation reinvests a small portion of the profits earned each year by the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) single family Mutual Mortgage Insurance Fund (MMIF) in low down payment mortgages, to help localities with the recruitment and retention of qualified K-12 teachers, policemen and firemen, and to make it easier for these public servants to buy a home. This bill is supported by the National Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the American Association of School Administrators, and the Fraternal Order of Police.

Specifically, the HOUSE Act authorizes 1% down FHA mortgage loans for qualified teachers, policemen, and firemen, and defers the 2.25% up-front FHA premium normally charged for such loans until the loan is repaid. The effect of this is dramatic. A typical borrower buying a \$130,000 home would see their down payment reduced by \$5,000, from \$6,300 to \$1,300.

In addition, the bill provides an incentive for continued service as a teacher, policeman, or fireman, by waiving 20% of the deferred FHA premium for each year that a borrower continues to live and work in the school district or local jurisdiction that employs them. Thus, after five years, the FHA premium would not only be deferred, it would be waived altogether.

To qualify, a teacher must be a full time K-12 teacher, buying a home within the school district in which that teacher is employed, or a policeman or fireman who is buying a home in the jurisdiction that employs them.

The FHA single family MMIF mortgage fund is strong. This week, FHA released audited financial results for fiscal year 1999, which showed a \$5 billion increase in the fund's capital from the previous year. FHA's capital level of over \$16 billion is substantially in excess of Congressionally required capital standards. The HOUSE bill proposes to use a very small portion of these profits to help public servants who teach our children and who police our streets to buy a home in the community in which they serve. I urge its adoption.