

people who buy their insurance outside the workplace. Such discrimination may have been tolerable in the 1940s and 1950s, when it was common for a citizen to be employed at one large company for most or all of his or her working lifetime. But it is completely out of step with today's dynamic workforce. Today, this health penalty tax, as I call it, falls most heavily on people who are mobile and part-time, on day laborers, farm workers, and the like. It falls especially hard on Hispanic Americans, who are often employed in these ways, and one-third of whom are uninsured nationally.

Section 106 is unfair in another way. It discriminates against lower-paid workers. Because today's tax-code is progressive, taxing people at increasingly higher rates as their incomes rise, tax breaks like Section 106 are by definition more generous to those in the higher tax brackets. Thanks to this regressive aspect of our system of progressive taxation—a system I hope to see replaced someday by the Flat Tax—the highly paid CEO today gets a much more generous tax break for health coverage than does the waitress at the corner coffee shop. This unfairness needs to be addressed.

Right now, the ranks of the uninsured are swelling by more than 100,000 persons a month, and it appears this pace will continue unabated until we go to the root of the uninsured problem, and that is the tax code. The time has come for a more equitable tax treatment of health insurance. If Americans were given health-care tax breaks without regard to where they work, or how much they make, it will go a long way to ending the uninsured problem in this country.

The Health CARE Act would address the inequities of the tax code by creating a new tax credit for the purchase of private health insurance, in the amount of \$1,000 for a self-only policy and \$2,000 for a family policy. A person could use this credit toward the purchase of any qualified private health-insurance policy, including so-called "COBRA" coverage between jobs. If the person is paying for insurance on his own, he could apply the credit toward the cost of that coverage. The credit would be available regardless of where the person works or how much insurance he purchases. He could use it even if he owes no income tax. He could begin using it as soon as he signed up for insurance. He would not have to wait for a refund check from the IRS.

A person would be eligible for the credit if he met all of the following conditions: First, he is not already covered by a federal-government health insurance program. Second, he is not offered an employer-subsidized health plan through his place of work. Third, his annual adjusted gross income is less than \$35,000 (if it is a self-only policy) or \$55,000 (if it is a family policy). Persons making up to \$10,000 a year more than these amounts would receive a reduced credit, which is phased-down over the range.

Experts believe that any health-care tax credit must be worth at least 30 to 50 percent of the cost of an average health-insurance policy in order for people to be willing and able to use it to buy private health insurance. The Health CARE Act credit is worth about 40 percent of the price of a self-only policy, and

about 30 percent of the price of a family policy, depending on one's health status and the general cost of health care in one's region of the country. As a result, the credit will be available to an estimated 21.5 million currently uninsured Americans, and would help an estimated 5.5 million Americans who are now paying for health insurance without the benefit of any federal health-care tax breaks. The CARE Act credit would enable at least 3.2 million uninsured Americans to afford private health coverage, according to the Lewin Group, a private health-policy consultancy in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Speaker, as a resident of the State with the highest uninsurance rate in the nation, I think tax equity for the uninsured is a moral, economic, and political imperative.

The CARE Act is, in sum, a bipartisan proposal that offers real hope to Americans shut out of work-based coverage, makes health-care tax benefits fairer for all workers, begins to repeal the health penalty tax, gets more Americans covered, and does all of this while preserving the employer-based system of coverage on which most Americans rely.

I am proud of this legislation and will work hard with my Democratic partner, Mr. DOOLEY, to pass it this year.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE NASA-GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the men and women of the NASA-Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, MD, and congratulate them on their continued success as one of our Nation's premier space flight centers. In December, Goddard led a successful mission to service the Hubble space telescope and launched the Terra spacecraft, the first of an exciting line of satellites based at Goddard.

During the 1999 holiday season, the Hubble was given new navigation equipment and an improved vision of the universe. During an 8-day mission, beginning on December 19, the crew of the space shuttle *Discovery* captured, serviced, and redeployed the Hubble space telescope. On Christmas day it was released back into orbit, returning it to full operation with a new and improved view of the universe.

Through these improvements, Hubble scientists, for the first time in its 10-year history, have identified and implemented a value measurement for how fast the universe is expanding. This rate of expansion—the Hubble constant—is essential in determining the age and size of the universe.

In addition to the great accomplishments with the Hubble, on December 18, the first Earth-observing system satellite was successfully launched. This system, known as Terra is operating as expected and will enable new research into the ways Earth's land mass, oceans, air, ice, and life interact as a whole climate.

Since 1993, NASA has cut the cost of missions by two-thirds and has cut the time it

takes to develop spacecraft by 40 percent. NASA is also launching an average of four times as many science missions per year.

The great successes of Goddard Space Flight Center would not be possible without the outstanding support that has been provided by the contracting and business community of this region. Their efforts, in partnership with NASA, have been critical in placing Goddard in the forefront of space technology and giving the United States the recognition of being number one in space exploration and know-how.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, as we enter the new millennium, let us continue to support the men and women leading us onto the new frontier of space exploration. These men and women of the Goddard Space Flight Center are furthering our knowledge of the planet and the universe by which we are surrounded. I thank the astronomers, scientists, and the entire space exploration community for a job well done.

PALACE OF THE GOVERNORS  
EXPANSION ACT

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to fund the expansion annex of the historic Palace of the Governors in Santa Fe, New Mexico. This is a companion bill to S. 1727 introduced in the Senate by Senator PETE V. DOMENICI.

The Palace of the Governors is the last remaining structure of a compound built between 1605 and 1610 by the Government of Spain. For centuries the compound, known also as "Las Casas Reales", served as a military and administrative center for the Spanish colonial empire, and functioned as the legislative chambers and official residence for those who governed New Mexico under the Flags of Spain, Mexico, and the territorial United States. This included 66 Spaniards, 17 Mexicans, and 22 U.S. Territorial Governors. Moreover, during what is known as the Pueblo Rebellion of 1680, the Pueblo Indians of New Mexico converted the historic structure into an Indian village until the Spanish return in 1692.

In 1909, the capitol for the New Mexican territorial government was moved to a more modern building, and the Palace of the Governors was designated as the Museum of New Mexico. Today, the Museum's collections include over 15,000 artifacts and priceless art works, 530,000 photographic images, 15,000 books, 450 linear feet of manuscripts, and 6,000 prints and maps. These precious items are irreplaceable historical and cultural artifacts, as they represent time periods spanning from the initial European exploration and colonization of the Southwest in the 16th century, to the birth of the atomic age and the exploration of space in the twentieth century. Some of Museum's artifacts include helmets and armor worn by soldiers in the expedition of Don Juan De Onate who established the first capital in the United States in July of 1598, and led the first permanent European community in the United States. These proud and

independent people, whose direct descendants thrive to this day in New Mexico, introduced horses, cows, donkeys, sheep, and agricultural technology. Together with the Native Americans they contributed to what is New Mexico's rich culture.

As another example of its fascinating holdings, the museum also houses the Railway station clock that was shot as Pancho Villa invaded the United States. The clock, its pendulum stopped by a bullet, captured the exact moment in time, when the last invasion of the continental United States took place.

Today, the Palace is visited by thousands of visitors from around the world who tour the exhibits, and then purchase fine Native American artwork sold by Native peoples under the portal in front of the Palace. This trade between cultures has taken place daily for hundreds of years, and is a testament to the interaction between different cultures.

Tragically, these many unique examples of Spanish, Native American, Mexican, and U.S. history face imminent destruction if immediate measures are not taken to provide safe and adequate storage, and proper exhibit facilities. Currently the major portion of the collections has no protection from loss by fire, flooding or disintegration and the buildings where the collections are stored are over 90 years old, with a steam heating system that contributes deterioration of the collections.

Recognizing this disastrous situation, a group of my fellow New Mexicans have undertaken the task of planning for the construction of a modern and technologically advanced annex, the size of which will permit the rich multi-cultural history of the southwest to be made available to present and future generations. Over time they have raised almost \$6 million from state, city, and private sources to acquire a building, the land, and planning for the new annex. The amount, however, is far from sufficient enough to meet the projected total project cost of an additional \$32 million. Thus, it is imperative that Federal funds be provided.

The bill I am presenting today will help ensure these treasures are protected and funds are provided, so that we save the irreplaceable collections of the Palace of the Governors from the danger of being forever lost. The bill would authorize \$15 million dollars through the Department of Interior, and will assist the Palace of the Governors construct and also equip their new annex. It will also make the vast collections available for exhibition to future generations of Americans and for study by scholars who currently cannot access them because of a lack of appropriate facilities.

Mr. Speaker, the Palace of the Governors is not only an irreplaceable jewel in New Mexico's history, but the history of our Hispanic Southwest and our country as a whole. I urge that we act to support this aspect of our nation's history with the foresight that will reward our children with these unique, historical, and cultural gifts drawn from our country's amazing diversity.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

TRIBUTE ON THE PASSING OF DR.  
HARGROVE F. WOOTEN

**HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 29, 2000*

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, tonight I pay tribute to an outstanding man, community leader and distinguished Physician, Dr. Hargrove F. Wooten. I was saddened at hearing of the passing of Dr. Wooten: husband, father, grandfather, colleague, and friend to those who knew him.

Dr. Wooten was born in Jacksonville, Florida on October 9, 1925. As a child, he attended local public schools in Jacksonville. In Jacksonville, Dr. Watson dreamed of enriching the life of his community and becoming a doctor. He would later pursue his dreams at Xavier University in New Orleans, Louisiana, where he earned his Bachelor of Science Degree in Pharmacy and Meharry Medical College, where he earned his doctorate in medicine. At these two prestigious and renowned universities, his goals to pursue a medical career were nurtured and his dedication to his community was enriched.

Dr. Watson continued to further his education by obtaining his Master of Science degree at Texas Southern University in Houston, Texas and completed his residency in Ophthalmology at the University of Texas Health Science Center. After completing his medical degree, he served as intern through a rotating internship in Houston and was the first African-American to intern at the Memorial Hospital system.

As a practicing pharmacist and CEO of the self entitled Wooten's Pharmacy Chain, a university physician for the University of Houston from 1966 to 1972 and CEO of both Physicians Eye Associates and Hargrove F. Wooten M.D. and Associates, Dr. Wooten tirelessly worked to improve the health of Houston area residents.

Throughout his lifetime, Dr. Wooten's leadership was sought and admired by many of his peers. He served as the President of both the Houston Pharmaceutical Association, the Lone Star State Pharmaceutical Association, and the Houston Medical Forum. In 1994-1996, Dr. Wooten was elected by Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity to be their Grand Sire Archon. In addition, he was a member in sixteen honorary, professional and civic organizations including the NAACP, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Chi Delta Mu Professional Fraternity and the American Academy of Ophthalmology.

As a husband, Dr. Wooten was his wife's best friend, companion, and advisor. As a father, he was his three daughters' counselor, aide, and friend. A father in the true sense of the word and a man of the finest hour, Dr. Wooten was a friend, mentor and counselor to many. His daughters, Florence, Patrice and Sharon knew that he loved them through his 49 years of matrimony to their mother, Eleanor.

At this sad time, I offer the Wooten Family my deepest sympathy. While I am aware that no words of consolation can ease the hurt and sense of loss that you now feel, I hope that in time, you will be comforted by the legacy of

*March 30, 2000*

accomplishments that he left behind. I hope that the fond memories of experiences you shared with him will continue to inspire you in the future.

SUPPRESSION OF PEACEFUL  
DEMONSTRATORS IN BELARUS

**HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 29, 2000*

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, March 9, I chaired a hearing of the Helsinki Commission at which we heard compelling and disturbing testimony about the deterioration of human rights and democracy in Belarus. I was pleased to have as one of our witnesses Anatoly Lebedka, Deputy Chairman of Belarus' legitimate parliament, disbanding Belarusian strongman Alyaksandr Lukashenka following an illegitimate 1996 referendum.

Unfortunately, Mr. Lebedka was one of some 500 people arrested last weekend, during a peaceful pro-democracy demonstration in Miensk. He was reportedly beaten and spent two days in detention before he was released. He is scheduled to go to trial on April 4. Also detained without explanation were more than 30 Belarusian, Russian and Polish journalists. Film shot by press photographers was reportedly confiscated. Aleh Hrudzilovich, a journalist with the opposition newspaper *Nasha Svaboda* and Radio Liberty who was initially detained on March 25, was summoned for interrogation on March 27, handcuffed, and then hit several times in the face while being transported by police to a detention center. He was released later that day. Other detainees also reportedly suffered physical abuse by the police. Several demonstrators have been put on trial, and some have already been sentenced to short-term detentions.

Mr. Speaker, during the Helsinki Commission hearing, I asked Mr. Lebedka about the scheduled March demonstrations, where he expressed the fear that there might be deliberate provocations by the police, as had been the case at a Freedom March rally last October. Fortunately, a large peaceful protest held on March 15 was held without any problems. According to many observers, including Mr. Lebedka, the growing number of participants in the officially-approved 30,000 strong March 15 demonstration prompted Lukashenka to take harsh measures against the March 25 demonstrators. Indeed, this comports with Lukashenka's recent warning that protestors who "get out of line" will have "the stuffing" beat out of them.

Mr. Speaker, the suppression of the March 25 demonstration is yet another illustration of the Lukashenka regime's disregard for fundamental human rights, including freedom of assembly and association, and information. It is another among a long list of outrages perpetrated by Lukashenka upon the people of Belarus. It is yet another in a pattern of violations of human rights commitments, which Belarus freely undertook when it joined the OSCE in 1992.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to reiterate my strong concern for the safety of Anatoly Lebedka and