

May 10, 2000

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY HONORS
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE
JOHN WEINGART

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 10, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize a truly outstanding citizen of Central New Jersey. Each year the New Jersey Environmental Lobby presents the Frank J. Oliver Environmental Award to individuals who have contributed in a special way to the protection and preservation of New Jersey's environment. This year, the NJEL has chosen to honor an individual who has devoted many years, both professionally and personally, to the protection of New Jersey's resources and its citizens. Today, I rise in honor of John Weingart for his tireless efforts to preserve New Jersey for future generations.

John Weingart is a man of many talents. He has worked for the Department of Environmental Protection, serving there as Assistant Commissioner before leaving to become the Executive Director of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Siting Commission. In the later capacity, he instituted several innovative concepts, including the idea of a voluntary self-selection process for municipalities interested in the siting facility. Although his efforts did not succeed in obtaining such a site, his approach is worthy of mention.

Even more surprising was John's reaction after all possible avenues had been explored. At this point, this government agency head did the unthinkable: he suggested that they disband his agency and that he and the other professionals seek employment elsewhere. Mr. Speaker, John is a true public servant who had the courage to eliminate his own job.

Mr. Speaker, the efforts of John Weingart serve as an excellent example to all citizens of New Jersey. I ask all my colleagues to join with me in congratulating John Weingart for his recognition by the Environmental Lobby.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS OF INDIAN ORIGIN

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 10, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPIO). AAPIO is an outstanding professional organization with over 36,000 physicians of Indian origin practicing across the nation. The Northern California Chapter of AAPIO will hold its annual meeting on May 13, 2000 in Fremont, California, a major city within my 13th Congressional District. The Northern California Chapter represents approximately 700 physicians and allied health professionals in Northern California and constitutes the local chapter of AAPIO.

Northern California AAPIO Chapter President Dr. Subroto Kundu and President Elect, Dr. Srinivas Ramachandran are among the of-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

ficers, the Board of Trustees and AAPIO members providing exemplary leadership within the 13th congressional district and all of Northern California. These individuals work to insure the integrity of health care delivery and are committed to the well-being of the communities in which they serve.

I applaud the Northern California Chapter's continuing efforts to organize and promote community service events, such as Health Fairs and Community Medical Education Seminars, upholding the physician's role in society to treat, teach, and guide individuals to good health.

AAPIO physicians provide their time and energy in community service and leadership. They are actively involved in healthcare related issues on the local, state and national level and represent the majority of physicians who serve our uninsured and under-insured populations.

As the AAPIO Northern California Chapter gathers on May 13, I wish them success at their Annual Meeting. I am confident AAPIO will continue to meet our healthcare challenges and will renew their commitment to community service and involvement.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

HON. DEBBIE STABENOW

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 10, 2000

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, on April 12, I led an hour of debate on the topic of prescription drug coverage for senior citizens. I read three letters from seniors around the state of Michigan who shared their personal stories with me. On that day, I made a commitment to continue to read a different constituent letter every week until the House enacts reform. This week, I will read a letter from Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Crook.

Modern medicine has changed dramatically over the last three decades. When Medicare was created in 1965, most medical treatment was provided in hospitals. Surgery and other inpatient treatments were the norm and Medicare coverage for long hospital stays was a priority. Today, with the benefit of breakthrough pharmaceutical discoveries, many diseases can be controlled and treated with medication rather than lengthy hospital stays. Routine surgeries and procedures are performed on an outpatient basis. Medicare needs to be modernized to reflect these changes in our nation's healthcare delivery system. The number one advance in medical science of the 20th century is the development of life-saving drugs. It is critical that Medicare covers prescription drugs, so that seniors can have access to the best and most medically advanced treatments.

Furthermore, the price of prescription drugs is rising at a dramatic rate and we need to do something to make prescription drugs more affordable. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, drug prices rose by 306 percent between 1981 and 1999, while the Consumer Price Index rose just 99 percent during the same period. In other words, prescription drug prices have increased at a rate three times higher than inflation.

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The letter I will read tonight comes from a couple who reside in Hillsdale, MI. I am saddened to say, their story is not unique. I have asked seniors from all over Michigan to send me their personal stories about the prices they pay for prescription drugs and many of them send me copies of their bills. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Crook sent me a bill that shows they paid over \$1,125 for their prescription drugs last year. Here is their story.

"Madam, we have a income of \$800 a month between the two of us. Beside, we have our household costs. We can't go [out] or do anything because [it] takes all of our income for the cost to live. Some weeks [we] wonder just how long we can go on. It [our prescription drug bill] keeps going up in cost and [we] cannot live. Mr. and Mrs. Arnold Crook."

Mr. and Mrs. Crook and thousands of older Americans like them need our help. Creating a Medicare prescription drug benefit to help cover the costs of their medications would make a big difference in their finances and in the quality of their lives. These seniors are a part of the "greatest generation ever" who helped build the strong economy we are enjoying today. Our nation is in economic good times and I believe it is time to fix the Medicare program so that it includes a prescription drug benefit.

TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 9, 2000

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I support this bill.

The exploitation of our world's girls and young women in sex trafficking is a tragic human rights offense.

Many of these women are kidnaped, sold, or tricked into brothel captivity.

And this does not happen just in countries miles away from our own. Each year women from all over the world are brought into the United States, for the sole purpose that they be bought and sold by American citizens for commercial sex.

I am happy to see that Congress is addressing this issue.

It is important that we protect the victims of the sex trade industry, and punish the predators that exploit the women.

This bill takes a significant step towards making a difference in the lives of women around the world.

It authorizes a new visa for trafficking victims to provide protection to the women and children that are brought into the United States and forced into prostitution.

The bill establishes initiatives to prevent trafficking through education, and authorizes assistance to the native countries of sex trafficked victims to help stop the industry.

And by establishing new criminal provisions and increasing penalties for traffickers this bill punishes traffickers for profiting from the victimization of women.