

May 11, 2000

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

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night, while working during the day. Bill also sold advertising for the Springfield newspapers prior to coming to the Social Security Administration.

Bill enjoys his life in Wilbraham, keeping a meticulously groomed yard and house. He plans to spend much of his retirement at his summer home at the Rhode Island shore.

I would like to take a moment to thank Bill Sheehan for a life of public and community service. Social Security beneficiaries in the Springfield area, and all of us who have worked with him throughout the years, will miss him very much.

HONORING NON-COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, it is a well established fact that non-commissioned officers are the backbone of our nation's military. Today's NCO's are given dual roles as leaders and technicians. In addition to providing operational support for their superiors and their organizations, these men and women are duty bound to provide for the health, welfare and safety of the troops under their care. An effective NCO must be mentally and physically dedicated as well as technically and tactically proficient in his or her field of expertise. Such qualities are inherent in Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios.

Widely known as Ben, CSM Palacios was born on November 11, 1950, on the island of Saipan in the Northern Marianas. He later moved to Guam where he graduated from George Washington High School. Initially enlisting with the Army on October, 1969, he underwent Basic Training at Fort Ord, CA.

Ben was destined to serve in the Army. He took a 2-year hiatus from military life in 1972 only to re-enlist in 1974 as a Specialist Four. He is now one of the Army's most senior NCO's.

All through his many years of military service Ben served both in the Continental United States and overseas with the 1st Infantry Division, the 9th Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division, and the 2d Armored Division. His assignments include serving in all enlisted leadership positions within the Armor Career Management Field—from Tank Commander to Command Sergeant Major. He also served as an Operations Sergeant in several Armor Battalions. In 1988, he was assigned as the Senior Enlisted Advisor for the 50th Armored Division, New Jersey Army National Guard.

From March 1994 through February 1996, Ben served as the Division Command Sergeant Major for the 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart, GA. While serving as the Brigade Command Sergeant Major for the 2nd Vanguard Brigade from May 1994 through January 1996, he participated in several deployments with the Brigade. These included tours of duty with the National Training Center and Bright Star '94 in Egypt. In addition, he was also deployed to Saudi Arabia in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm as the

3-69 Armor Battalion Command Sergeant Major. Ben served as the Command Sergeant Major for the Third Mobile Armored Corps at Fort Hood in Texas for 2½ years prior to assuming duty as the United States Army Forces Command Command Sergeant Major on July 27, 1998.

Ben sought further development through professional military education. He attended the Fifth Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy and the Sergeant Major Academy. He also completed the First Sergeants Course in addition to obtaining an Associate's Degree from Fort Steilacoom Community College.

Among his decorations are the Legion of Merit (1OLC), the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal (2OLC), the Army Commendation Medal (3OLC), the Army Achievement Medal, the Good Conduct Medal (9th Award), the National Defense Medal with Bronze Star, the Southwest Asia Service Medal with two Bronze Stars, the NCO DP Ribbon (#4), the Army Service Ribbon, the Overseas Ribbon (#2), and the Kuwaiti Liberation Medal. CSM Palacios has also been a member of the elite Sergeant Morales Club since 1979.

On Guam and the Marianas, the personal accomplishments and success of native sons and daughters are celebrated and adopted as triumphs for everyone in the community. Through his illustrious service in the United States Army, Ben has attained respect and admiration of many. He has brought recognition, not only to himself, but also to the people of the Marianas. On their behalf, I commend Command Sergeant Major Benjamin C. Palacios for his outstanding achievements.

COMMITTING TO EQUAL PAY

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today more women are working than ever before. The number of working women has grown from 18.4 million in 1950 and to 63 million in 1997. Women made up 29.6 percent in 1950 and 46.2 percent in 1997. Our nation depends on the contributions of working women. And equal pay has been the law of the land since 1963. Yet today is Equal Pay Day—the day when women's earnings from January 1999 to May 11, 2000 will finally equal what men earned in 1999 alone. 37 years later after the enactment of the Equal Pay Act, women are still paid less than men—even with similar education, skills and experience. It's time we ensure women can make ends meet and find respect and opportunity on the job.

In 1996, women were paid 74 cents for every dollar men received. That's \$26 less to spend on groceries, housing, child care and other expenses for every \$100 worth of work. Over a lifetime of work, the 26 cents-on-the-dollar adds up. The average working woman will lose \$523,000 to unequal pay during her working life.

Ensuring equal pay for equal work is about improving the lives of families. In the United States, 99 out of every 100 women will work for pay at some point in their lives. 71.9 per-

cent of women with children younger than 18 are in the labor force. This means the wage gap doesn't just shortchange women. It hurts children and families because many working women are the primary breadwinners in their households. In fact, nearly two-thirds of working women provide half or more of their household income, and forty-one percent are the sole source of income. Many families need two full paychecks to get by every month. One full paycheck and one three-quarters paycheck just doesn't cut it.

That's one of the reasons I am a proud co-sponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act. This legislation will help us to be better enforce the Equal Pay Act. It will put wage discrimination on the basis of gender on the same footing as wage discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity.

The Paycheck Fairness Act will toughen the remedy provisions of the Equal Pay Act. It will strengthen enforcement of the Equal Pay Act by committing more resources to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. It will improve education and outreach on differentials between women and men in the workplace, and lift the gag rule imposed by many employers who forbid employees to discuss their wages with co-workers.

I believe most employers want to treat their workers fairly. But for those employers who reward the hard work and loyalty of women with a partial paycheck, we need such measures as the Paycheck Fairness Act to put a stop to their wrongdoing.

Mr. Speaker, 37 years is long enough to wait for equity. It's time we join together and end the wage gap.

THE OCCASION OF THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE S.H.A.P.E. COMMUNITY CENTER

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 11, 2000

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I recognize Self-Help for African People Through Education, Inc., more commonly known as the S.H.A.P.E. Community Center, of Houston, Texas, on the occasion of its 30th anniversary. On Saturday, May 13, 2000, S.H.A.P.E. will celebrate 30 years of commitment and service to strengthening Black families, the community and the nation.

S.H.A.P.E.'s successful growth is a result of the exemplary services the center provides and offers to area residents. Founded in 1969, chartered by the State of Texas in 1971, and classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) organization, S.H.A.P.E. started as a summer enrichment program for youth promoting knowledge of, pride in, and respect for their African heritage. Since its inception, S.H.A.P.E. has been involved in the creation, implementation and operation of education, cultural enrichment, employment, economic development, and crime/juvenile delinquency prevention programs.

In the spring of 1974, S.H.A.P.E. purchased what was once its main building, located at