

June 20, 2000

INTRODUCTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE ACT OF 2000

HON. SAM GEJDENSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the International Anti-Corruption and Good Governance Act of 2000, legislation I introduced today to make combating corruption a key principle of U.S. development assistance.

This bill will help to accomplish two objectives of pivotal importance to the United States. By making anti-corruption procedures a key principle of development assistance, it will push developing countries further along the path to democracy and the establishment of a strong civil society. Moreover, by helping these countries root out corruption, bribery and unethical business practices, we can help create a level playing field for U.S. companies doing business abroad.

According to officials at the U.S. Department of Commerce, during the past five years, U.S. firms lost nearly \$25 billion dollars-worth of contracts to foreign competitors offering bribes.

Bribery impedes trade and hurts our economic interests by providing an unfair advantage to those countries which tolerate bribery of foreign officials. By making anti-corruption procedures a key component of our foreign aid programs, this bill will help those countries to set up more transparent business practices, such as modern commercial codes and intellectual property rights, which are vital to enhancing economic growth and decreasing corruption at all levels of society.

My bill requires U.S. foreign assistance to be used to fight corruption at all levels of government and in the private sector in countries that have persistent problems with corruption—particularly where the United States has a significant economic interest.

The United States has a long history of leadership on fighting corruption. We were the first to criminalize international bribery through the enactment of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act of 1977. Moreover, United States leadership was instrumental in the passage of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions. Enactment of this bill would be a logical next step.

Corruption is antithetical to democracy. It chips away at the public's trust in government, while stifling economic growth and deterring foreign economic investment. In addition, corruption poses a major threat to development. It undermines democracy and good governance, reduces accountability and representation, and inhibits the development of a strong civil society.

This bill takes a comprehensive approach to combating corruption and promoting good governance. By outlining a series of initiatives to be carried out by both USAID and the Treasury Department, the legislation addresses the political, social and economic aspects of corruption.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

As the largest trader in the global economy, it in the United States' national interest to fight corruption and promote transparency and good governance. Not only does it help to promote economic growth and strengthen democracy, but it helps to create a level playing field for U.S. companies that do business overseas.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE KEELY JARDELL SCHOOL OF DANCE

HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. NICK LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the outstanding accomplishment of the young ladies of Keely Jardell's School of Dance in Nederland, Texas. The school consists of approximately 500 students from throughout the area of southeast Texas ranging from ages six to eighteen years of age. The school focuses not only on dancing, but also on the importance of discipline and character. In addition to studying in the Jardell School of Dance, the students also participate in academic, athletic, and religious activities within the community. Practicing 12–15 hours a week, these young ladies have demonstrated an ability to balance their responsibilities and excel in them with grace. Lessons like these give the students of the Keely Jardell School of Dance skills that will be invaluable to them as they encounter challenges in their futures. These young ladies serve as role models to their peers and to members of the community as well.

Recently, sixty-nine of these students participated in regional competitions in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in Houston, and across the state of Texas. Members of the team devoted countless hours to perfecting their craft; their efforts have payed off. At regional competitions, the school was awarded the highest score, judge's choice, choreography, overall high score, and spirit awards. Their outstanding performances at the regional level has qualified them for the National Competition in San Antonio, Texas this summer. The prestige of the school and its talented performers is known well throughout the nation. In late 1999, an invitation was received inviting the girls to perform in Washington D.C. and in New York City during the month of July, 2000. The members of the school have graciously honored the request and will be performing Sunday July 2nd at 5:30 p.m. at the Post Office Pavilion, here in Washington. I urge all who have the opportunity to enjoy a truly amazing show worthy of your time.

After the appearance in Washington, the performers will attend special dance classes at the Broadway Dance Center in New York City. Numerous fund-raisers and community events are being staged to defray the expenses of the trip. It has been a total commitment of all involved, but well worth the work. The members of the Keely Jardell School of Dance have relentlessly committed themselves to perfecting their talents in preparation for the National Competition.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to have the honor of commending the students of the

11585

Keely Jardell School of Dance on their astounding achievements and abilities. Young people such as these should serve as examples to America of the extraordinary breed of leaders it can expect in its future. These young ladies deserve our attention, support, and best wishes as they demonstrate the remarkable product of their labor and talent.

50TH BIRTHDAY OF THE MANCHESTER, NH, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION MEDICAL CENTER

HON. JOHN E. SUNUNU

OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. SUNUNU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Manchester VA Medical Center, located in New Hampshire's First Congressional District, on the occasion of the Hospital's 50th birthday, July 2, 2000. This outstanding facility continues to provide exemplary health care to thousands of veterans who have served America with distinction and honor. As the hospital celebrates its 50th year, I hope we will also take a moment to reflect on the service and sacrifice of those service men and women. The devoted staff of the Hospital, including Public Relations Director Paul Lamberti who provided me with an extensive historical background of the Center, also deserves special thanks and appreciation for their dedication to the health care of our veterans.

The establishment of the Manchester VA Medical Center began at the conclusion of World War I with the World War Veterans' Legislation Subcommittee on Hospitals' recommendation that the New Hampshire project be funded. Congressman Fletcher Hale followed suit with legislation seeking Presidential approval for the construction of a facility to treat veterans throughout northern New England. Specifically, the measure called for "a modern, sanitary, fireproof, two-hundred bed capacity hospital plant for the diagnosis, care, and treatment of general and medical and surgical disabilities and to provide Government care for the increasing load of mentally afflicted veterans regardless of whether said disability developed prior to January 1, 1925, at a cost not to exceed \$1,500,000."

Final legislative approval came in 1945, and in 1946, after the end of World War II, the United States Government acquired a parcel of land, previously owned by Governor Frederick F. Smyth, that would become the site for the Hospital. Smyth served from 1866 to 1880 on the Board of Managers of the National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers and was well acquainted with the needs of veterans everywhere. The Smyth Tower, the replica of a famous Scottish lookout, can be found on the grounds today. The structure was erected by Smyth in 1888 and is named as an Historic Site on the National Register.

Construction of the VA Medical Center began in 1948 and two years later, on July 2, 1950, the VA Medical Center was officially dedicated. In the following decade, staff attended to the health care needs of approximately 23,500 patients.