has led SBA's Disaster Loan Program through difficult reorganization and development phases, and in doing so has taken an inherently unpredictable and difficult to manage program and made it one of the best-managed in government. He has brought tremendous expertise and professionalism to difficult policy and budget deliberations in Washington. He has developed a skilled and dedicated management team and a core group of professional disaster specialists. But perhaps most important are the extraordinary numbers of people whose lives he has touched—during Berky's tenure, literally hundreds of thousands of disaster victims have received the help they desperately needed to rebuild homes and businesses ravaged by disasters of every sort.

Those of us who have worked closely with Berky on disaster issues will certainly miss that professional relationship, but all of us owe Berky our gratitude, not only for his efforts on behalf of our constituents, but for his exemplary dedication to the highest traditions of public service. I ask that all my colleagues join with me in wishing Berky the very best in his retirement after his long and distinguished career.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO PROVIDE TAX RELIEF FOR MUTUAL FUND SHAREHOLDERS

HON. JIM SAXTON
OF NEW JERSEY
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, our tax code has many features that are economically counterproductive, but few are as destructive as those aiirned at personal saving and investment. The current tax system undermines personal saving and investment in many ways, but today I would like to address the tax treatment of mutual fund capital gains distributions. Middle income savers and investors involuntarily receive these distributions from their mutual funds, and must pay tax on them even though they may have sold no shares in the fund. Today, I am introducing legislation to provide a partial exclusion limiting the federal taxation of these involuntary distributions.

Essentially, the current law forces middle income savers and investors to pay tax on capital gains they have not realized. Even if the value of their shares has declined or they have owned them for only a short time, they can be slammed with a huge tax liability. As a recent Joint Economic Committee study pointed out, this tax can reduce the pre-liquidation rate of return by 10 to 20 percent. Furthermore, due to the complexity of the law, many taxpayers can easily pay this tax twice. This is unfair and undermines incentives to save and invest.

In recent years, mutual funds have enabled many ordinary Americans to share in the tremendous economic gains that resulted from the technological innovation, productivity gains, and surge in wealth of the 1990s. Tens of millions of ordinary Americans now have substantial investments in the financial markets, many of them through mutual funds. Federal policy should accommodate these efforts of our citizens to provide for their retirement security, education, housing, and other needs. Federal tax policy should not erect excessive tax barriers undermining the incentives and ability of middle income taxpayers to plan for their own needs.

Today, I am introducing legislation providing a $3,000 tax exclusion for individuals, and a $6,000 exclusion for couples, to shield annual capital gains distributions. When taxpayers sell their shares in the mutual fund, they would pay the tax on these gains, but these exclusions would shield most middle income taxpayers from immediate taxation and potentially double taxation on capital gains distributions. Other investors generally are not taxed on an accrual basis on their capital gains, and we should do what we can to level the playing field, and end tax discrimination against personal saving and investment. As the eminent economist Irving Fisher once wrote, "A tax on accretion penalizes those who are rising the social scale, the builders of the nation . . ." The current tax bias against thrift should be a major target of reform for the foreseeable future.

UNITED AIRLINES—US AIRWAYS MERGER

HON. JAMES T. WALSH
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my strong reservations about the proposed merger of United Airlines and US Airways. While I am a strong proponent of economic growth and development, this recently announced merger could only have a detrimental impact on Central New York air service and our economy. Congress was told by the airline industry in 1978 that deregulation would bring about greater competition, better service, and lower costs for the consumer. In many of our large, major urban centers this is exactly what happened; however, smaller urban areas haven't seen similar results. Many of these communities find themselves saddled with one dominant carrier and no competition resulting in extremely high airfares.

This combination of the two airlines would not only control about 27 percent of the U.S. market but over 50 percent of the travel market out of Syracuse, which already pays the fifteenth highest airfares in the Nation. I cannot support a merger if increased travel costs, possible loss of service, and dismissal of longtime employees are part of the equation.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT PORCHER

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN
OF SOUTH CAROLINA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Robert Porcher III, for being honored "Father of the Year" at The National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) Annual Awards Banquet held on June 2, 2000. The National Fatherhood Initiative was founded to stimulate a national movement while confronting the growing dilemma of father absentia. NFI is dedicated to improving the lives of children by increasing the number who have involved, committed, and responsible fathers.

In a league that has been shrouded with negative media coverage on irresponsible fatherhood, Robert Porcher was one of the first athletes to take a stand for responsible parenting. He has been a humanitarian, actively participating in Detroit's United Way as the official spokesman; a philanthropist, making a lifelong commitment to provide funds enhancing public awareness, increased educational opportunities, and aid to economically disadvantaged individuals; and a mentor, providing deserving youth with scholarship assistance and recreational activities through the Robert Porcher Scholarship Award and Top of the Line Football Camp.

Always committed to his educational endeavors, Robert graduated from Cainhoy High School in Wando, South Carolina. In 1992, he matriculated at South Carolina State University where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice. During his outstanding collegiate career, Robert was named 1991 Walter Camp All-American and 1991 MEAC Defensive Player of the Year. He entered the National Football League as a first-round draft pick by the Detroit Lions.

Mr. Porcher is a spectacular athlete, devoted father, advocate, humanitarian, and philanthropist. He is a man of extraordinary kindness and courage, intellect and eloquence. Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Robert Porcher, III, for his outstanding work as an exemplary father, athlete, and role model.

INTRODUCING THE PUBLIC INVESTMENT RECOVERY ACT OF 2000

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO
OF MASSACHUSETTS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, June 22, 2000

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, today I filed the Public Investment Recovery Act of 2000. This legislation would enable the Federal Government to recover a portion of the taxpayer dollars currently used to develop pharmaceutical, biologic and genetic products.

It is important that both Congress and the pharmaceutical industry recognize that the American people, through Federal tax money, contribute substantially to the development of new drugs. Sadly, many of these same taxpayers are without prescription drug coverage and cannot afford the high costs of these medications.

Consider a recent report in the New York Times which focused on the hardships of one of our nation's senior citizens who has no prescription drug coverage. The gentleman featured in the report depends on an $832 monthly Social Security check to survive. Tragically, these funds are not enough to pay for the eye drops he needs to battle his disabling glaucoma. Yet, the drug he so desperately needs—Xalatan—was developed with