

boards, commissions, corporations, and offices for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in strong support of the amendment being offered by my colleague, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, to prohibit any funds from being used to implement the veterans equity resource allocation system.

VERA was created to correct a perceived inequity in the manner in which veterans health care dollars were being distributed across the country.

While a noble effort, VERA was fundamentally flawed in that it did not look at the type of care being delivered to veterans in a given region. Furthermore, it also failed to consider the effect of regional costs of providing health care in its calculations.

Under VERA, the watchword was efficiency. Deliver the most care at the least cost. While ideal for outpatient care, VERA has unfairly penalized those VISNs that provide vital services such as substance abuse treatment, services for homeless veterans, mental health services, and spinal cord injury treatments. Under VERA, these services are all deemed too expensive and "inefficient."

VERA was also implemented at a time when the VA budget was essentially flat-lined. Thus, VISN directors were not provided additional funds to offset the costs of annual pay raises for VA staff, and annual medical inflation costs. This was not a problem for those directors of VISNs that received money under VERA. However, for those directors in VISNs, that were losing money under VERA, it was a double hit that crowded out additional funds needed for other vital services.

It is commendable that the subcommittee was able to find an additional \$1.2 billion for veterans medical care. Yet, thanks to VERA, very little of that money will find its way to the Northeast, where it is vitally needed. Instead, it will be sent to those VISNs that have already seen increases in funding due to VERA.

Mr. Chairman, this is simply wrong. The veterans of the Northeast, who are older, sicker and less mobile than their counterparts in the sun belt should not be unfairly penalized for where they choose to live. This amendment starts to correct this problem by terminating VERA, a well-intentioned, but poorly executed system that blatantly discriminates against those veterans who reside in the Northeast.

HONORING THE GRAND OPENING
OF THE EMERY-WEINER SCHOOL

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of the new Emery-Weiner School in southwest Houston. This \$14 million educational facility combines the 23-year-old I. Weiner Jewish Secondary School and the brand new Emery High School to form the Emery-Weiner School. This expansion combines the quality education offered at the I. Weiner Jewish Secondary School with the cutting edge facility of the new campus.

This fall as classrooms fill for the first time at the Emery-Weiner School students will benefit from the formation of these two institutions. The state-of-the-art facilities at the new campus will include art and music rooms, as well as a theater, emphasizing the important role the arts play in education. The campus also houses a multi-court gymnasium, cultural arts facility, computer and science labs. The twelve acres in southwest Houston on which the campus sits is surrounded by several more acres of accessible playing fields. The campus will provide tremendous opportunities to students.

On Thursday, September 20, 2001, the Emery-Weiner School will celebrate the opening of this new campus with a special event honoring two of its many benefactors, Mr. Joe Kaplan and Mr. Joe Kornfeld. The proceeds from this celebration will benefit the "Joe Fund," a fund appropriately named for these two founding fathers. Mr. Kaplan and Mr. Kornfeld contributed countless hours to seeing this project come to fruition. Their selfless offerings make them role models for the students who will benefit from their efforts.

The "Joe Fund" was created to bolster teacher enhancement programs and projects. It will be used to purchase materials to provide teachers the necessary means to incorporate creativity and ingenuity into their everyday classroom. I applaud the leadership of the countless teachers and volunteers who contributed to the erection of this new campus and recognize the commitment of these individuals to providing opportunities through education to our young people.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the many people who contributed to the construction of the Emery-Weiner School, and I look forward to seeing the many ways in which the innovative voice of this institution will help to educate and shape the minds of Houstonians. There is no doubt, this school will soon serve as a model for other schools across the nation.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE
THAT WORLD CONFERENCE
AGAINST RACISM PRESENTS
UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO AD-
DRESS GLOBAL DISCRIMINATION

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2001

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 212, sponsored by myself and my good friend from California, the Ranking Member of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. LANTOS.

It is easy to believe that in the twenty-first century, racism, like a rabbit under a magician's hat, has simply disappeared with the abracadabra of superficial legislation and the convenience of turning a blind eye. But for those of us who prefer to see the truth rather than a prefabricated illusion, we must recognize the need for international cooperation to address racism at the U.N. World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa.

Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." It is wrong, however, to combat racism with provisions that are racist themselves. Without a doubt, it is unacceptable for anti-Semitic language to be used in the conference's Program of Action to address the Arab-Israeli conflict. The notion of equating Zionism with racism is one that we rejected over twenty years ago when we spoke out vehemently against a U.N. resolution that made such an insidious claim. Thus, it is critical that we carefully consider the consequences of attending a conference that promotes a tenet we simply cannot accept. At the same time, we must reaffirm our commitment to working together with the international community to eradicate global discrimination and establish ourselves as a leader in this cause. We cannot let our silence speak for us now.

This legislation, Mr. Speaker, promotes U.S. support of the World Conference Against Racism and encourages us to take action in a manner consistent with our American values of racial and religious tolerance. It is essential that we support such legislation and not allow our global fight against racism to vanish into thin air or be diminished by language that exacerbates the problem rather than fixing it. I urge my colleagues to support this unique opportunity to address global discrimination and to support House Resolution 212.

IN HONOR OF GARY KRUPP OF
LONG BEACH, NEW YORK

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2001

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Mr. Gary Krupp of Long Beach, New York.

On July 29, 2000, Pope John Paul II named Gary a Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great, in recognition of his work with Casa Solievo della Sofferenza, a health care facility in Italy. Through Mr. Krupp's generosity and commitment, the hospital acquired highly advanced medical equipment, benefitting countless men, women and children.

The Order of Saint Gregory was founded by Pope Gregory XVI in 1831, who named it after his predecessor, Pope Saint Gregory the Great. The Order frequently honors those who have distinguished themselves through service to the Catholic Church and accomplishments benefitting society. Gary is the seventh Jewish person since 1831 to be awarded this honor.

It is not every day that an honor such as this is given to one of our neighbors. I congratulate Gary for receiving this outstanding and unique honor. I believe he is an exemplary Long Islander and American, and I have no doubt Gary will continue his work on behalf of Long Island, the Catholic Church, and Casa Solievo della Sofferenza.