

October 16, 2001

THE MENTAL HEALTH COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP ACT

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, Sonoma County, which I represent, as well as Stanislaus County in California, currently face a potential crisis in their mental health communities. In order for these County staffed inpatient psychiatric units to keep their Medicare provider status, under last year's HCFA rule, the hospitals would have to take over employment of County health care workers who currently provide the psychiatric care. Today I am introducing legislation that will enable the hospitals to keep their Medicare provider status while allowing the health care workers to remain County employees. This is an avenue the counties and hospitals currently don't have under the HCFA rules. Under my bill, everyone wins: County employees keep their job status, the hospitals retain their Medicare provider status, and Medicare patients will continue to receive the high quality treatment that they deserve.

This predicament began when the agency formerly known as the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) issued the Provider-Based Rules (PBR) as part of the "Outpatient Prospective Payment System" final rule last year. The regulations were issued in an attempt to curb abuses and manipulation in the Medicare reimbursement system. However, it created an unintended consequence for my constituents.

The concept behind the PBR was to regulate hospital acquisitions of off-site physicians' offices to ensure these outpatient sites were sufficiently integrated with a hospital in order to receive the higher cost-based reimbursement available only to hospitals. HCFA's rule also stated that this applied to inpatient services. In effect, the PBR prohibits management companies from employing the health care workers who provide the care at its inpatient hospital units. While this may seem reasonable on the surface, this employment requirement presents a serious problem that HCFA did not intend when it issued the PBR. In the case of Sonoma and Stanislaus counties, the counties employ both the management staff and the health care workers at local Sutter hospitals' inpatient psychiatric units. In my district, Sonoma County currently manages and employs the staff at the former Oakcrest psychiatric unit (now the "Norton Center") through a contract with Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa. Preserving this management contract arrangement between Sutter and the County is critical because current County health care workers have the necessary expertise to deliver this specialized type of care to patients. My bill will allow this type of public-private management contract arrangement to continue without threatening a hospital's Medicare provider status.

In accordance with the PBR, the Norton Center can meet the seven requirements that demonstrate it is an integrated part of the Hospital. However, it cannot meet HCFA's additional requirements for entities operating

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through management contracts. Unless it can comply with all the regulations, the Norton Center will not receive any reimbursement under the Medicare and Medicaid programs. If the Norton Center has to forfeit its role as a Medicare and Medicaid provider, it may have to stop providing services altogether since it serves a high percentage of Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. HCFA's recommendation is that entities in violation of the management contract requirements just employ the County health care workers directly. This is not a realistic remedy for Sonoma County because it would result in the termination of approximately 60 County employees. That's why I am pleased to offer the "Mental Health Community Partnership Act," because I agree that the regulations were never intended to eliminate this form of public-private management contract arrangements or threaten access to essential health care services. Specifically, this bill allows a hospital to contract with a public entity to provide inpatient psychiatric services, if the health facility is operated or managed by a state or local government. It's a win-win for everyone because it preserves the rule's original goal to curb Medicare abuse, the Norton Center will keep its Medicare provider status, County workers will keep their job status, and Medicare and Medicaid patients will continue to enjoy access to inpatient psychiatric services. Congress should take this opportunity to protect quality jobs and provide access to comprehensive health care for our most needy.

HONORING JERRY POOLE ON HIS
RECEPTION OF THE DOROTHY
RICHARDSON AWARD FOR RESIDENT
LEADERSHIP

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding member of the New Haven, Connecticut community and my dear friend, Jerry Poole. Jerry was recently honored here in Washington by the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation with the Dorothy Richardson Award for Resident Leadership.

Dorothy Richardson emerged as a community resident leader in the mid-1960s in response to an urban renewal effort that threatened her neighborhood. Her diligent work with lenders city officials, foundation heads, community organizers, and her neighbors served as the vehicle to improve her neighborhood's housing stock. She later founded the first Neighborhood Housing Service in Pittsburgh and served as a model for the development of NHS partnerships across the nation. Each year the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation honors individuals who reflect the character and spirit of Dorothy Richardson. Jerry is one of only nine selected from thousands of volunteers in the 1,800 communities across the country served by the NeighborWorks network of nonprofit organizations for this prestigious national recognition.

Jerry has been the Executive Director of New Haven's Opportunities Industrialization

Centers of America for the last fifteen years. He has dedicated his professional career to ensuring that the unemployed find work. His incredible dedication has opened up employment opportunities for thousands throughout Greater New Haven. In addition to his professional career, Jerry has spent innumerable hours working with his neighbors and community leaders to change the face of the West River neighborhood—giving residents a renewed sense of pride and hope in this community.

A dynamic neighborhood leader, Jerry's vision and tenacity has not only made a real difference in the West River Neighborhood but across the State of Connecticut. It was only eight short years ago that he joined the West River Neighborhood Association, a group of residents dedicated to improving their community. When they first started, the Association was a group of neighbors who met regularly at each others homes and never had much more than one hundred dollars in their checking account. Based on Jerry's simple belief that residents should give ten percent of their time to their neighbors, the group developed a strategic plan that is now coming to fruition. Under his leadership, the West River Neighborhood Association focused their attention on an ambitious plan. Partnering with the City of New Haven and the Mutual Housing Association of Southern Connecticut, the group worked hard on plans for the West River Memorial Park and to rehabilitate housing along George Street—a section of their neighborhood that had lacked attention for years. I had the opportunity to work closely with Jerry and his group to bring federal funding to the West River Memorial Park project and earlier this year, the West River neighborhood Association joined Mutual housing in breaking ground on a \$1.3 million rehabilitation project on blighted properties.

The commitment and dedication Jerry has shown to our community and to the State of Connecticut is unquestionable. His advocacy and strong voice have gone a long way in enriching the lives of his neighbors and their families. I am honored to stand today to join with his wife, Joyce, daughter, Summerleigh, family, friends, and the New Haven community in congratulating Jerry Poole on this very special occasion.

HONORING KAREN MATHEWS'
RETIREMENT

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Karen Mathews on the occasion of her retirement.

First elected Stanislaus County Clerk-Recorder in 1990, her retirement on September 30, 2001, capped a 17-year career of dedicated public service. Perhaps most compelling is the price she paid for that public service.

In 1994, tax protesters assaulted Karen in her home because of her refusal to file fraudulent tax liens against local officials. Earlier, she had been subjected to repeated threats of violence but not once, for one moment, did she succumb to these threats.

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Nine people were subsequently indicted by a federal grand jury, tried, and on May 1, 1997, convicted of conspiracy and obstruction of the Internal Revenue Service, assault on an elected official and federal racketeering. This trial signified the first prosecution of a sexual assault on an elected official by an anti-government splinter group. Sentencing ranged from six months in-home detainment, to approximately seven years in federal prison. On November 10, 1997, Roger Steiner, the assailant, was convicted and sentenced to 21 years, 10 months in federal prison.

Karen is the chairwoman of a special committee formed by the California State Recorder's Association to develop legislation to protect recorders dealing with threatening anti-government criminal extremists. Karen was instrumental in the passage of legislation, resulting in two California laws; one to protect public officials from general threats and harassment; and the other to expedite court resolution of frivolous documents.

She has testified twice before congressional committees regarding domestic terrorism. She is now working to pass federal legislation protecting victims from frivolous lawsuits brought by inmates. Over the past three years she has been featured on NBC Dateline, periodicals such as People, The New York Times, Klanwatch, and a soon to be published article in The Ladies Home Journal. With this exposure, she hopes to help educate America on the danger and cowardice of anti-government extremists.

I want to commend and recognize Karen Mathews for her courage and outstanding service and dedication to the citizens of Stanislaus County. It is a privilege to call her my friend and I ask my colleagues to rise and join me in honoring her as she retires from public life.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to emphasize the importance of Hispanic Heritage Month, September 15th–October 15th. A culture that began over 500 years ago as a fusion between Spanish and indigenous societies across the Americas, the Hispanic community has helped forge our Nation's identity and today the Latino population is the largest minority group in the United States. The Hispanic community enriches the ethnic diversity that makes our Nation unique, contributing greatly to the cultural, artistic, economic and political life of this country.

Like many other immigrants who came to this country in pursuit of the American dream, Hispanics have struggled to overcome adversity, fighting stereotypes and discrimination. This battle has not been easy and I salute all those that have worked to advance the prosperity of our Latino population. While this fight is far from over, we can see the results of our efforts throughout the Country, beginning with our Congress. Today, I am joined by a constantly growing number of Hispanic col-

leagues, each with a strong work ethic and committed to public service and the preservation of our democracy.

At home in New York City, I am proud to represent a district that reflects a cultural mosaic of Hispanic groups such as people of Puerto Rican, Dominican, Mexican and Cuban heritage. The influence of Latin culture is seen throughout the streets of Upper Manhattan from Washington Heights to El Barrio. It is an essential part of the cultural Mecca that defines the 15th congressional district and I am honored to speak for one of the Nation's most distinct groups.

More than our fellow citizens, Latinos are our brothers and sisters. I would like to honor and thank the entire Hispanic community its contributions to the past, present, and future of the United States.

IN HONOR OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF GRACE

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Our Lady of Grace Church. This church has served the community of Hoboken, New Jersey for many generations. The church will celebrate its anniversary on Saturday, October 20, 2001, at the Casino-In-The-Park Restaurant in Jersey City, New Jersey.

Our Lady of Grace Church is one of the largest Roman Catholic Churches in New Jersey. It was founded in 1851. Today, Our Lady of Grace Church stands as the focal point of Hoboken's Church Square Park. Its cornerstone was laid in 1875, construction of this grand edifice was completed in 1878 and dedicated by Bishop Corrigan.

Francis G. Himpler, a well-known 19th Century architect, designed this grand gothic structure. After the church dedication in 1878, members of the Italian and French royal families donated ceremonial works of art to decorate this magnificent dwelling.

This Church is well known for its kindness, charity, and for its involvement in the parish. Our Lady of Grace Church stands poised to continue to make invaluable contributions to the ongoing success of the Hoboken community.

Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Our Lady of Grace Church on its 150th Anniversary.

REMARKS OF SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2001

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to share with the Members of the House the excellent remarks of Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld yesterday at the Memorial

Service in Remembrance of Those Lost on September 11th. The fine statement is set forth as follows:

We are gathered here because of what happened here on September 11th. Events that bring to mind tragedy—but also our gratitude to those who came to assist that day and afterwards, those we saw at the Pentagon site everyday—the guards, police, fire and rescue workers, the Defense Protective service, hospitals, Red Cross, family center professionals and volunteers and many others.

And yet our reason for being here today is something else.

We are gathered here to remember, to console and to pray.

To remember comrades and colleagues, friends and family members—those lost to us on Sept. 11th.

We remember them as heroes. And we are right to do so. They died because—in words of justification offered by their attackers—they were Americans. They died, then, because of how they lived—as free men and women, proud of their freedom, proud of their country and proud of their country's cause—the cause of human freedom.

And they died for another reason—the simple fact they worked here in this building—the Pentagon.

It is seen as a place of power, the locus of command for what has been called the greatest accumulation of military might in history. And yet a might used far differently than the long course of history has usually known.

In the last century, this building existed to oppose two totalitarian regimes that sought to oppress and to rule other nations. And it is no exaggeration of historical judgment to say that without this building, and those who worked here, those two regimes would not have been stopped or thwarted in their oppression of countless millions.

But just as those regimes sought to rule and oppress, others in this century seek to do the same by corrupting a noble religion. Our President has been right to see the similarity—and to say that the fault, the evil is the same. It is the will to power, the urge to dominion over others, to the point of oppressing them, even to taking thousands of innocent lives—or more. And that this oppression makes the terrorist a believer—not in the theology of God, but the theology of self—and in the whispered words of temptation: "Ye shall be as Gods."

In targeting this place, then, and those who worked here, the attackers, the evildoers correctly sensed that the opposite of all they were, and stood for, resided here.

Those who worked here—those who on Sept. 11 died here—whether civilians or in uniform,—side by side they sought not to rule, but to serve. They sought not to oppress, but to liberate. They worked not to take lives, but to protect them. And they tried not to preempt God, but see to it His creatures lived as He intended—in the light and dignity of human freedom.

Our first task then is to remember the fallen as they were—as they would have wanted to be remembered—living in freedom, blessed by it, proud of it and willing—like so many others before them, and like so many today, to die for it.

And to remember them as believers in the heroic ideal for which this nation stands and for which this building exists—the ideal of service to country and to others.

Beyond all this, their deaths remind us of a new kind of evil, the evil of a threat and menace to which this nation and the world has now fully awakened, because of them.