

the renovation of the historic Columbus School, by transforming it into a senior citizens center, community center, recreation center, and library.

Mayor Fitts proved to be a fiscal conservative, as well, with South Salt Lake receiving high bond ratings and awards from the Government Finance Officer's Association. He also succeeded in preventing the implementation of property tax increases.

Always active in regional efforts, he has served on many public boards and councils along the Wasatch Front, dealing with important policy issues such as transportation and public safety.

He is currently Vice-Chair of the Wasatch Front Regional Council, and a member of the Criminal Justice Advisory Committee.

He has also been President of the Salt Lake Valley Conference of Mayors and President of the Salt Lake County Council of Governments.

Mayor Fitts showed great courage and leadership in providing early public support at a critical time for light rail. Fortunately, Mayor Fitts had the vision to realize the importance of bringing mass transit to the Salt Lake Valley.

This vision continued after the North-South line from Salt Lake City to Sandy was completed. Three light-rail stops are located in South Salt Lake, and Mayor Fitts has sought to integrate the light-rail system into the community in a way that is both socially and economically beneficial.

The 3300 South Transit-Oriented Redevelopment Project is a key component of this integration. This project seeks to utilize high-density housing, commercial offices, as well as retail and community services around the light-rail station.

This project will stimulate economic growth while at the same time encourage further use of mass transit, thereby helping to prevent further sprawl in the Salt Lake Valley.

This project received the 2001 Best Achievement in Planning for Transit Oriented Development from the Utah Quality Growth Commission, as part of South Salt Lake's Light Rail Corridor Master Plan.

In addition to his professional accomplishments, Mayor Fitts is well known for his sense of humor and wit. While he took his job seriously, he did not take himself too seriously. Which has always been the mark of an effective leader and public servant.

Therefore, I am proud to join with his many admirers in extending my highest praise and congratulations to Mayor Randy Fitts for his dedicated public service to the City of South Salt Lake. I extend my most heartfelt good wishes for all his future endeavors.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE
LABORATORY SERVICES ACCESS
ACT OF 2001

HON. PHIL ENGLISH

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. ENGLISH. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Medicare Laboratory Services Access Act of 2001. I am pleased to be joined

in introducing this important legislation by my colleague from Florida, Representative PETER DEUTSCH. Laboratory testing is an essential component of the health services we provide to our seniors. The health care needs of Medicare beneficiaries require them to have assured access to the full range of diagnostic laboratory tests. This measure would help ensure that the community laboratories that serve our nation's seniors have the resources necessary to continue to provide life-saving laboratory services. This legislation also seeks to remedy a financial burden imposed by new regulations requiring safe needles and related practices.

Laboratory tests facilitate early detection and accurate diagnoses which in turn result in more effective and less costly treatment. As a majority of the currently available tests to diagnose and treat diseases in the Medicare population involve taking and analyzing a specimen—or sample—from the beneficiary for laboratory analysis, health care providers rely on the accurate and timely collection of specimens to ensure adequate diagnosis and treatment. In fact, laboratory tests only account for 1.6% of the total Medicare budget but are used in 70% of medical decision-making. Yet, underpayment for specimen collection currently threatens the ability of community laboratories to continue to provide this much-needed service.

In 1984, Congress established a policy to provide for a "nominal fee" that was to cover the costs associated with collecting the sample on which a clinical diagnostic laboratory test was performed and paid for under the Medicare program. That fee was established 17 years ago at a rate of \$3.00 and has not been increased, even for inflationary factors since that time.

Our nation has seen amazing medical breakthroughs in technology while simultaneously the environments in which health care providers work has become more and more regulated. Further exacerbating the pressures on laboratories is that the available population of phlebotomists—the folks trained to draw blood—continues to shrink.

The combination of increasing costs, eroding reimbursement levels, fewer available health care workers with a growing population of Medicare beneficiaries threatens the Medicare program's ongoing ability to provide essential laboratory services, especially in rural areas and remote sites such as nursing homes. In January 2001, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) implemented new blood borne pathogen rules designed to improve worker safety. Yet, no additional funds have been provided to implement these requirements.

While I fully support new requirements for hospitals and other health-care facilities to identify and provide safer sharps systems as these policies help protect public health, we need to assist laboratories with these additional costs. This legislation would provide a modest increase in the specimen collection fee—an increase that would help offset the costs of these important new regulations and recognize inflationary increases over the past 17 years.

The Medicare Laboratory Services Access Act of 2001 increases the Medicare specimen

collection payment for FY 2002 to \$5.25—the amount the payment would be today had it been indexed annually to the CPI-U. For subsequent years, the bill allows for an annual adjustment based on the CPI-U.

I urge my colleagues to join us in the effort to bolster our community-based system of care for Medicare beneficiaries. I am pleased that my bill is supported by a number of national organizations, including the leading providers of clinical laboratory services. Groups endorsing this legislation include: American Association of Bioanalysts, the American Association for Clinical Chemists, the American Association of Occupational Health Nurses, the American Clinical Laboratory Association, the American Medical Technologists, the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science, the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, the American Society for Microbiology, Becton Dickinson, and Quest Diagnostics. This important measure will help ensure Medicare beneficiaries access to the quality laboratory services they need and deserve.

HONORING THE GOOD DEED OF
JUSTIN BRAMEL

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the good deed of Justin Bramel, a Murfreesboro, Tennessee, eighth-grade student who helped his school bus driver in her time of need.

Justin's bus driver, Sally Brown, became sick one recent afternoon after finishing her route. Fortunately for Mrs. Brown, Justin spotted the bus parked on the side of a road. He realized something was wrong and investigated the situation. He found Mrs. Brown to be very ill.

Justin calmly used the bus transceiver to advise school officials about the situation and direct emergency personnel to the location. Thanks to Justin's concern and levelheaded actions, Mrs. Brown is now recovering and should be back to work soon.

I want to salute Justin for his quick actions and his concern for his fellow human being. People like Justin epitomize the spirit of this nation and make it a better place to live.

COMMEMORATING 2001 DINNER OF
CHAMPIONS

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 2001 Dinner of Champions being put on by the Central California Branch of the Mountain Valley California Chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. The first of these annual events will honor racing legends Blackie Gejean, Joe Boghosian, and the late Fred Gerhardt.

The Dinner of Champions made its national debut in 1972 and honors local public leaders and personalities for their efforts to champion the fight against multiple sclerosis. The National MS Society strives to reach out to those affected by the crippling disease and raise awareness for MS.

Mr. Gejeian's involvement in racing began in 1949 and he won championships all over the Central Valley. Blackie was presented the Most Popular Driver award four years in a row. After his retirement in 1958, Blackie continues contributing to racing by promoting auto races including the Autorama for the past 40 years.

Mr. Boghosian was first exposed to racing in 1949. He earned many honors including the Northern California Championship. In 1965 he moved from California to Indianapolis. Joe actually built the engine that put Mario Andretti in the Indy 500 winner's circle in 1969. He is still building engines and anything else that needs reliable power today.

Mr. Gerhardt was involved in auto racing from the 1930's until his passing. He and his good friend, the late Bill Vukovich, raced hot rods and midget cars in the 1930's and 40's. Fred built his first Indy car in 1956 and continued fielding Indy cars through 1976.

Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to acknowledge and honor the efforts of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and these honorees. I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating and thanking this organization and these racing legends.

BUNNY LOVE FOUNDATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize the Bunny Love Foundation. An event will be held on December 5th in Dallas, to raise the level of awareness of efforts to eliminate domestic violence against children. Awareness will be accomplished through fundraising efforts, affiliations with prevention programs, and events designed to educate the public about the extent of the crisis.

The Bunny Love Foundation is a Dallas-based non-profit organization founded in 1997 by Anne Davidson with a mission of helping children in need. The Foundation's model for giving is extremely effective and can be used as a model for other charities because it addresses the needs of those affected not only on a local level, but nationally and globally as well. Ninety percent of the funds raised will go to children in Dallas through the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center, and 10% will be given to UNICEF specifically for the humanitarian effort for children in Afghanistan.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in recognizing the dedication and efforts of the Bunny Love Foundation and their partnership with the Dallas Children's Advocacy Center. The mission of this organization serves as a model for others to follow in the fight to eliminate domestic abuse.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

BIOLUMINESCENCE

HON. MARK FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to the chairman for his recommendation of funding for bioluminescence measurement and signature detection in the Navy RDT&E account in this bill.

This is an evolving area of knowledge which has very important military applications.

Many of my colleagues know that plankton in the world's oceans give off light flashes when stimulated by movement in the water by objects such as ships, submarines and swimmers. This ever-present phenomenon represents a powerful detection tool for anti-submarine and mine warfare.

We can utilize this phenomenon for detection of opposing forces—but we must also be aware of it to protect our own operations. For example—it is my understanding that—a Navy SEAL team in Operation Desert Storm was forced to alter its landing site because of concern that bioluminescence in the intended landing area would reveal the team's presence.

At present—bioluminescence is detected and measured by a device developed at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institution in my district.

Because of the cost and size of this first-generation measuring equipment—only three have been produced. The funding I have requested and the Committee has approved would fund a program involving Harbor Branch scientists which would develop measuring equipment small enough to be launched from a rubber raft and inexpensive enough to be utilized in large numbers. Only such an expendable version offers the hope of accurately measuring bioluminescence in all the militarily-important regions of the world.

This is an important initiative which will take advantage of the expertise at Harbor Branch for the benefit of our military.

I again thank the chairman for recommending this funding and express my hope that this item will be preserved in conference.

THE CONSUMER AND RETAIL SALES STIMULUS ACT OF 2001

HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 30, 2001

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, New York's economy is in deep trouble. We lead dozens of States in economic decline. Jobs are being lost. Small businesses are going under. Municipal governments are going back into debt. Fire and police budgets are strained.

How do we stimulate an economy that was sputtering before and staggered after the September 11 attacks? Some believe the answer to recession in handing \$25 billion in retroactive Federal corporate tax benefits to 13 Fortune 500 companies. Of course, there is no guarantee that largesse will work its way from

corporate headquarters to working families on Long Island.

Others believe that the answer to recession is spending old fashioned Keynesian economics. But some spending proposals clearly overreach, and there is no guarantee that the spending will be targeted specifically to jumpstart the economy now, when we most need it.

The best way to stimulate the economy is to give immediate, tangible tax relief to American consumers: suspend sales taxes, and use federal resources to reimburse state and local governments. To insure that this tax reduction strategy does not lead to huge new deficits, such revenue loss from the Federal budget should be capped so as not to exceed the \$25 billion, the corporate alternative minimum tax rebate, passed by the House of Representatives earlier this fall.

Rather than enriching only the richest, a sales tax suspension is the quickest and broadest way to boost local economies for everyone, across the board. It will encourage consumer spending in our downtown villages and towns as well as our regional malls. And because it will be temporary, it will create an incentive to buy now. A reduction in the sales tax may not mean much for the CEO of a multi national company. But it would be a huge boost to working families. It might help them with their holiday purchases, or school supplies for their kids or even make the difference in buying a new home appliance.

This House has just approved a \$25 billion retroactive repeal of the alternative minimum tax for the richest corporations of America. If we can find the money for Enron and we can find the money for IBM, we should be able to find the money for people who have lost their jobs and their health insurance and their unemployment insurance and the small businesses who are being forced out of business in New York today.

The working families and small businesses on Long Island are hurting. They can not afford indefinite or problematic relief that might not kick in for years. Their need is immediate "The Consumer and Retail Sales Stimulus Act of 2001" addresses that need, it addresses it now.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 28, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3338) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes:

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the amendment offered by my good friend Congressman VISCLOSKEY.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation's steel industry is in a crisis situation. Since 1997, 26 companies have filed for bankruptcy. Since January first