

government and his steadfast support for the First Amendment; his unyielding respect for our Constitution. As editor of "The Progressive" Magazine, Sam Day agreed to publish "The H-Bomb Secret: How We Got It, Why We're Telling It." The federal government tried to prevent publication of that article, bringing suit against the magazine in a case that upheld our right to free speech. By publishing that article, Sam taught us much more than how to build a bomb. His efforts taught us about the right of a citizen to question his or her government . . . a radical notion whether you're seventeen or seventy. And he taught us the obligation of every human being to actively oppose nuclear annihilation, no matter what the personal toll. These are lessons that I carry with me every day into the Halls of Congress.

Sam's commitment to social change was unwavering; his mission the same whether challenging the government of the United States on its nuclear policies or challenging our local bus company on policies that adversely affected people with disabilities—to protect and preserve humanity in the face of everything from outright aggression to insensitive indifference. He remained, until the very end, a self-proclaimed, "Old Codger for Peace." Our nation has lost a powerful voice of conscience. I ask the Congress today to recognize the life of Sam Day, Jr., an indefatigable fighter for peace, and to continue, through our own words and deeds, his lifelong pursuit of justice.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MIDDLE
INCOME HEATING ASSISTANCE
ACT OF 2001

HON. BOBBY L. RUSH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Middle Income Home Heating Assistance Act of 2001 (MIHHA).

In the face of this winter's natural gas crisis, there has been a great deal of discussion nationwide, about raising the LIHEAP 150% poverty level eligibility cutoff. While LIHEAP funding and eligibility limits must be increased to protect the increasing number of people who desperately need assistance, the tremendous cost associated with such legislation, must be supported by other legislative initiatives designed to accomplish similar assistive goals.

Consider the statistics in Illinois alone. In Illinois, when the eligibility cutoff was 125% of poverty level, LIHEAP covered 633 thousand households. At the current eligibility cutoff of 150% of the poverty level, 740 thousand households will be covered. If raised to 175%, as some have proposed, close to 1.4 million households will be covered. This would more than double the number of homes currently covered, and would according to State officials, result in an additional \$130 million in administrative costs.

Instead of altering LIHEAP, my bill would pick up where LIHEAP leaves off. The importance of relief for those earning just above the 150% poverty rate is especially clear in a year

when many individuals have received increases in Social Security benefits, and have been pushed just beyond the cutoff.

My bill does the following: where a taxpayer, in any given year, pays an average of 50% more per therm, over the average per therm cost for the previous three years, she is entitled to a refundable tax credit. The maximum credit, which is phased out from the 150 to 300% poverty level, is \$500. Under this bill, a family of four, with an annual income of \$25,575 would be entitled to a \$500 credit. The phase-out, for a family of four would end at one with an income of \$51,150.

While we must find solutions to the United States' energy problems, we in Congress must also attend to the consequential costs which those problems levy against the average consumer. The Middle Income Home Heating Assistance Act of 2001 focuses on the middle income consumer, and ensures some relief in years where current law offers none.

CHARITY TO ELIMINATE POVERTY
TAX CREDIT ACT OF 2001

HON. JIM KOLBE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. KOLBE. Mr. Speaker, we are introducing today—Valentine's Day—the Charity To Eliminate Poverty Tax Credit Act of 2001. This legislation is a Valentine's present for all the families and people who are struggling every day to survive. I am talking about our nation's poor.

We are a wealthy nation. The federal government should reward people for trying to help raise the standard of living of those living in poverty.

This bill would give every American the option of sending \$100 to an organization that primarily assists the poor instead of sending the money to the IRS.

When you fill out your tax forms this year, wouldn't you like the opportunity to redirect \$100 of your money that is headed to the federal bureaucracy and give it directly to an organization that is helping raise the standard of living of some of America's poorest citizens?

The Charity To Eliminate Poverty Tax Credit Act of 2001 allows a tax credit up to \$100 (\$200 if filing a joint return) for charitable contributions to tax-exempt organizations that help people whose annual income is under 150 percent of the official poverty level. Currently, that level is \$12,525 annually for an individual and \$25,575 for a family of four.

The legislation also acknowledges the impact that inflation can have on the "real" dollars that people may give to charity so we have indexed the tax credit amount to inflation.

Another important provision requires an organization to spend at least 70 percent of its money on helping the poor in order to qualify. Only a maximum of 30 percent of the charitable organization's budget can be spent on administrative expenses, expenses to influence legislation, fundraising activities, and litigation costs, among others. We want the charitable contribution to go to the poor, not to increase an administrator's salary.

President Bush's tax proposal touches on this objective by suggesting that a charitable tax deduction be allowed for people who do not itemize their deductions. The President also has encouraged the States to provide a charitable tax credit. In my State of Arizona, we are already allowed to take a \$200 charitable tax credit. This legislation goes one step further by offering the credit at the federal level.

Private charities succeed because they are community driven and stress personal responsibility. These local food banks and shelters become personally involved in helping change lives. I believe a better way to help the poor is through local organizations that are designed, implemented, and staffed by residents of the neighborhoods they serve.

Also, the tax credit will put more money on the table for programs that help the poor and create a more competitive atmosphere. Each organization will be overseen and judged, not by Washington, DC, but by the community and the people giving the money to the charitable organization. This will in turn improve services to the poor.

Hopefully, we will all agree to give a Valentine's gift to our nation's poor by enacting this anti-poverty relief tax credit—the Charity To Eliminate Poverty Tax Credit Act of 2001.

FIRE SAFETY AT THE LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS

HON. ROBERT W. NEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 14, 2001

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on House Administration has received a report from the Office of Compliance on its fire-safety investigation of the Library of Congress buildings. A similar report on fire safety in the Congressional Office Buildings was presented to the Committee in January of 2000.

The Office of Compliance report identified numerous deficiencies in Library fire safety and noted that while some conditions have already been corrected, others may require additional time and resources. After carefully considering the report, I, along with the Committee's ranking member, Mr. HOVER, have written to the Architect of the Capitol to determine what remedial measures will be implemented and the timetable for addressing each of the deficiencies raised in the report. I am committed to working with the Architect and the Librarian to make the Library buildings as safe as possible for the many public patrons, employees, Congressional staff, and Members who work in or visit the Library.

Twice in the Library's history, in 1812 and 1851, significant parts of its collections were decimated by fire. It is my hope that with the technology and expertise at our disposal, history will not repeat itself.