

economy as a whole—with the Advanced Technology Program, for example, which has helped a wide variety of companies pass through the so-called “valley of death” that can prevent good research ideas from becoming good processes or products.

But tonight’s focus is not on the past—although NIST’s record accomplishment provides plenty of cause for celebration. We’re really here to make a downpayment on the future by showing all the current and former directors and staff at NIST how grateful we are for their dedication, their imagination and their insight. Working steadily and fruitfully outside the limelight, they have enabled our nation’s reputation for technological progress to shine.

Now it’s hard to know what the technology of tomorrow will look like. History is littered with embarrassingly misguided predictions—a few of them even uttered in hearings before the House Science Committee. But I think it’s safe to say that, whatever the technology of the future is, NIST will have played a role in its creation, enhancement or propagation.

So I want again to thank everyone who has made NIST a success and to pledge to all of you that I will do my best to ensure that NIST continues to set the standard for what a federal lab should be.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK R.  
MASCARENAS

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I now honor an extraordinary human being and great American Frank R. Mascarenas. Mr. Mascarenas was loved and admired by many. He was an educator, an active force in the life of youth in his community, and first and foremost, a loving family man. Sadly, Frank died on January 25 surrounded by friends and family. As family, friends, and former students mount this loss, I would like to honor this great man.

Mr. Mascarenas was an individual that served his country, state, and nation well. For most of his life, Frank worked as an educator, Frank began his teaching career in 1959 in Cortez, CO, after having served his country for eight years in the U.S. Army. In addition to being an outstanding teacher throughout the course of his career, Frank was also dedicated to sports and to coaching. He began coaching in Cortez at the same time he began his teaching tenure. As an educator and a coach, he helped to improve the quality of life in his community.

Frank grew up in Montrose, CO, where he was well known and widely admired. He was raised by his grandmother, Manuela Lovato, and aunt, Cecilia Trujillo. He graduated from Montrose High School and then earned his bachelor of arts degree in education after attending Ft. Lewis College and Adam State College. Frank married his life partner and beautiful wife Carolyn Leech in the summer of 1958. Frank and Carolyn have three children—a son Mark, and daughters Stacey and Kelli.

After teaching and coaching in Cortez until 1981, he took his talents to Rangely where he

again had a dramatic impact on the community’s youth. In 1991, Frank joined the ranks of Palisade High School where he had a famed coaching tenure. While at Palisade, Frank was an integral part of a remarkable run that brought Palisade four consecutive state championships. This historic championship run was fitting punctuation for Frank’s successful career as a coach and educator. Like those great Palisade football teams, Frank was a champion in the truest meaning of the word. More than just winning football games, though, Frank helped instill lifeshaping virtues in both his players and students alike.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, as you can see, this extraordinary human being truly deserves our gratitude for his service to our community. Frank R. Mascarenas may be gone, but his legacy will long endure in the minds of those who were fortunate enough to know him. Colorado is a better place because of Frank Mascarenas.

Our thoughts and prayers are with his wife, Carolyn, and his children, Mark, Stacey, and Kelli, during this difficult time. Like these loved ones, western Colorado will miss Frank greatly.

VILLAGE OF PINECREST CELEBRATES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF INCORPORATION INTO MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, this year marks the fifth anniversary of the incorporation of the Village of Pinecrest, of which I am a proud resident, as the County of Miami-Dade’s twenty-ninth municipality. It is with great pleasure that I congratulate Mayor Evelyn Langlieb Greer, the Village Council, and all the residents of Pinecrest on five productive and successful years as part of one of the nation’s largest counties.

Mayor Langlieb Greer’s leadership and that of the Council has certainly been instrumental in making the Village of Pinecrest one of the best and most rewarding places to live in South Florida. Its schools, some of the best in the County, its parks and recreational areas, and its convenient location make Pinecrest one of the most desirable residential areas in Miami. My family and I are honored to call this community home and I commend the Mayor and the Council for working so hard to ensure that it remains one of the best places to live.

The residents of Pinecrest should also be proud to have Village Manager Peter Lombardi, Assistant Village Manager Yocelyn Galiano Gomez, and their staff working to ensure that the Village policies and laws are smoothly implemented and administered. Without their dedicated service and that of Police Chief John Hohensee, Operations Manager Michael Liotti, and all of Pinecrest’s police officers, truly our Village’s finest, Pinecrest would not be the safe and wonderful place that it is.

The sense of community and hometown atmosphere is enhanced and complemented by

the many benefits of the surrounding greater Miami area. I have lived in Pinecrest for many years and never cease to marvel at the beauty and comfort of this area.

I ask my Congressional colleagues to join me in congratulating the Village of Pinecrest and wishing much continued success to: Vice Mayor Cindie Blanck, and Councilmen Barry Blaxberg, Leslie Bowe, and Robert Hingston.

DROP IN MEDICARE IMPROPER PAYMENTS

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 7, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) reported that improper Medicare payments to doctors, hospitals and other health care providers declined in fiscal year (FY) 2000 to an estimated level of 6.8 percent. This level compares with an error rate of approximately 8 percent in FY 1999. The error rate has fallen by roughly half since it was first estimated at approximately 14 percent in FY 1996.

The FY 2000 payment error rate represents improper payments of \$11.9 billion out of total payments of \$173.6 billion in the traditional fee-for-service Medicare program. This improper payment amount compares with improper payments of \$13.5 billion in FY 1999 and \$23.2 billion in FY 1996.

The Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) met its target for reducing the Medicare error rate to 7 percent in FY 2000 and continues to take steps to meet its FY 2002 goal of 5 percent.

Mr. Speaker, this continued decline in the Medicare error rate demonstrates the success of all the actions that HCFA has taken to reduce billing errors in Medicare over the past five years. According to the Inspector General, the significant, sustained improvement reflects HCFA’s improved oversight, its efforts to clarify Medicare payment policies, and its insistence that doctors and health care providers fully document the services that they provide. Other factors have been new initiatives and resources to prevent, detect and eliminate errors and fraud in Medicare.

Mr. Speaker, many criticized HCFA when the payment error rate was 14 percent and demanded that HCFA reduce it.

Now many criticize HCFA for the actions it has taken to reduce payment errors and for insisting that providers file claims accurately. I say that we should praise HCFA for its efforts to reduce Medicare payment errors, and we should ensure that HCFA does not diminish its efforts to reduce those errors still further. We should not be satisfied with payment errors in Medicare.

To achieve further reductions in Medicare payment errors, we must reduce the complexity of Medicare payment rules and improve provider education and information, but we must continue to insist on accuracy in claims filing. We must increase the resources available to HCFA to help providers file their claims properly and to monitor claims to ensure correctness. We must also provide the resources