

veterans and forefathers. We fought in wars to end injustices, communism, and nationalism. Now, we are trying to stop terrorists, and our country is united even more.

People show their love and patriotism for our country by flying flags, giving blood, money and food to people in need. They don't care about how much money we have or our skin color. They just want to help out. That is why America is the best country in the world.

If you want to know what freedom is, then look around you. We have freedom of speech, religion, and education. We can go to school, speak, and pray without being punished. We aren't told what job to have, where to live, and what to do. We have many laws, but they are not to punish us, they are to protect us.

America is great because we can vote for whomever we want in a secret ballot. We are allowed to choose our president, governor, or mayor without being punished.

So basically, America is cared for and so are its people. They want to help America and make it even more united. Our veterans played a very important part in American history because they helped us gain freedom.

So remember every time you say the Pledge of Allegiance, or sing the national anthem, be proud, and think of our real heroes. We are united because we are free and we are free because we are United. God Bless America!

HONORING THE DEARBORN/DEARBORN HEIGHTS CHAPTER OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2001

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to pay tribute to the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters on their 50th Anniversary.

Recognized by the National League of Women Voters on December 19th, 1951, the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter has fulfilled and continues to fulfill its primary goal of encouraging the informed and active participation of citizens in government, working to increase understanding of major public issues and influencing public policy through education and advocacy.

The Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter has provided numerous services to the community since their inception in 1951. In 1952, they provided election-day childcare in 63 precincts, allowing parents to vote. They helped establish the Northwestern Child Guidance Clinic in 1963. Throughout the years, they have worked with ABC News on election-day exit polling. These fine women have helped pass library proposals and establish a diversity committee which works to engage local students in community discussions. Mr. Speaker, these women have served their community well.

Though they are a non-partisan group, the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter of the League of Women's Voters is extremely political, focusing their efforts on child health and welfare, juvenile justice, and campaign finance reform. A League representative sits on the

Rouge River Advisory Council, as well as the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments Educational Advisory Council. As spelled out in their original charter, the League's actions are always a reflection of their member's priorities.

I would like to recognize the current officers of the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters: Elizabeth Linick, Janice Berry, Mary Jo Durivage, Mary Anne Wilkinson, Jeni Dunn and Mary Bugeia. I thank all the fine members of this Chapter of the League for all their hard work over the past 50 years, and would ask that they keep it up. On the occasion of their 50th anniversary, I would ask all my colleagues to salute the Dearborn/Dearborn Heights Chapter of the League of Women Voters.

INTRODUCTION OF THE DEFERRED ANNUITANT FAIRNESS ACT OF 2001

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2001

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, later today I will introduce legislation, the Deferred Annuitant Fairness Act of 2001, to correct a glaring inequity in Federal retirement law. At a time when we are considering legislation to protect the hard-earned retirement benefits of working men and women—and give them more control and responsibility over their income in retirement, at least one class of federal government retirees find themselves at an unfair disadvantage and their retirement benefits eroded through no action of their own.

I speak of deferred annuitants of the federal government—employees who work for the Federal Government for at least five years, vest in the retirement program, and who separate from service before becoming eligible for immediate retirement. When these individuals claim their retirement annuity in later years, the pension benefit they have financed is eroded by inflation and they are put at a financial disadvantage which they cannot overcome.

Under current law and practice, the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund invests employee contributions but gives no added value to a retiree for the time his or her money was invested before the deferred annuity starts to be paid out. As a consequence, if two employees gave identical service, with the first retiring in 1970 and the second in 2000 with annuities for each starting in 2000, the second retiree receives nearly five times the annuity of the first. In addition, the spouse of a CSRS retiree is not protected during the deferral period. (This protection is already afforded to FERS spouses and spouses of Members of Congress participating in CSRS.)

This legislation will make two primary changes in current law to correct this inequity. First, it will compensate deferred annuitants for the added value generated over the deferred period from investing what was deposited into the trust fund on behalf of the employee up to the time of separation from service is compensated. Second, it will eliminate the disparity in spousal protection for deferred annuitants covered under CSRS and FERS.

Mr. Speaker, fairness and equity should be the watchword when it comes to the treatment of our federal workforce—the hundreds of thousands of men and women who dedicate their lives to service to this nation and our people. With the changes proposed in the legislation I introduce today, federal employees who take a hiatus from their federal service before retiring will be protected from inflation and the erosion of their pension benefit available upon retirement. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of these changes.

This measure is endorsed by the National Association of Retired Federal Employees.

RETIREMENT OF TOM MILLER, PRINCIPAL OF ST. JOSEPH HIGH SCHOOL IN ST. JOSEPH, MICHIGAN

HON. FRED UPTON

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2001

Mr. UPTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to offer heartfelt congratulations to Tom Miller. Throughout his career, Tom Miller has constantly demonstrated a commitment to the educational and athletic development of the future leaders of our society. His professional life has consisted of numerous positions of leadership at various schools in Southwest Michigan, including his current post as principal of St. Joseph High School, which he has served for over 23 years. Tom's dedication to the enhancement of the educational experience of young people is a truly noble quality, and one that will be sorely missed.

Additionally, Tom's involvement in the athletic arena of the school system has earned him a place in the Battle Creek St. Philip High School Athletic Hall of Fame. Tom spent numerous years involved in student athletics, his basketball teams enjoying a host of victories during his tenure. I would like to wish the best of luck to Tom in his retirement, which will allow him to spend the coming years with his family, including his wife Mary Lou and all of his loved ones.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1, NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2001

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I want to praise President Bush for putting forth an education plan that offered children in failing schools a chance to get a better education. It is too bad that Democrats and supporters of the failing status quo were allowed to gut the legislation, H.R. 1, at the Committee level to remove any chance for failing schools to successfully improve their performance or to let parents have the option to move their children to better schools.

I believe that control of education should be retained at the local level. Last year, Illinois