

March 21, 2001

RAILROAD RETIREMENT AND SURVIVORS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2001

**HON. NICK J. RAHALL II**

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure in introducing the "Railroad Retirement and Survivors' Improvement Act of 2001" today.

In the Third District of West Virginia, we have 8,300 citizens who will benefit from this bill, which ranks southern West Virginia seventh in the United States.

The bill we are introducing today will double benefits for widows of railroad retirees, reduce the retirement age from 62 to 60 years of age with 30 years of service, and allow a person to be vested in the system after five years of service, rather than 10 years, as currently required.

No taxpayers' dollars will be used to finance these railroad retirement benefits, which are paid by employer and employee taxes.

This bill includes the exact provisions of H.R. 4844, which I helped to write last year, and which passed the House by an overwhelming vote of 391-25 on September 7, 2000. However, the Senate did not act on the bill.

The bill is a product of two years of negotiation between management of the railroad industry and railroad workers. As last year's vote demonstrates, the bill has strong bipartisan support. I will work to bring the bill to the House floor for a vote, and I expect to see the same strong support as last year.

Once this bill becomes law, it will enable railroad retirees and widows to enjoy a better quality of life, by receiving the increased benefits which they deserve. They spent their working lives paying into their retirement and they deserve to reap decent benefits.

PREVENT CHILD ABUSE—N.J.  
APRIL BLUE RIBBON CAMPAIGN

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind my colleagues that the month of April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Throughout the month, thousands and perhaps millions of individuals from around the country who are working to reduce child abuse will be wearing blue ribbons to draw attention to this monumental national concern.

Prevent Child Abuse—New Jersey is undertaking the blue ribbon campaign in my state with a kickoff event on March 28.

This organization serves as a national model for how a statewide group can make a difference in combatting a serious social problem.

By establishing local partnerships, PCA-NJ helps communities, strengthens families and supports parents through parenting programs,

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

education and training, advocacy and public awareness programs.

Valuable PCA-NJ programs include the Parent Linking Project, which provides comprehensive services to teen parents and their children at school; Healthy Families, under which intensive, home visitation services are provided to overburdened parents of newborns; Every Person Influences Children, which sponsors parent education workshops for parents and training for teachers to incorporate life skills and character education into daily curricula, and the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative, which undertakes case management and counseling programs for teens to build self esteem and help them make healthy choices.

In addition to the Blue Ribbon Campaign, PCA-NJ also sponsors many public education and community awareness efforts, including a speakers' bureau, loaned materials under the New Jersey Parenting Education Resource Center (PERC); and a web site and 800 number for information and other resources.

Mr. Speaker, in New Jersey, each year, over 80,000 calls are made to the N.J. Division of Youth and Family Services by concerned citizens and professionals reporting suspected child abuse and neglect. This figure for just one state gives us an idea of the extent of this shameful problem in our country—the most advanced, educated and prosperous nation in the world. It is my hope that drawing attention to this problem, as we are doing in New Jersey and around the country with the Blue Ribbon Campaign, will eventually and dramatically reduce the incidence of child abuse.]

HONORING THE LATE DOCTOR  
JESSE W. AUSTIN

**HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late Doctor Jesse W. Austin, Sr., a constituent of mine who passed away on Monday, February 12, 2001, at his residence in Forest, Mississippi. Dr. Austin, affectionately known as "Doctor Bill", was 84 years of age at the time of his death and had been a practicing physician in the City of Forest and Scott County for more than 39 years.

Doctor Bill was born in Osyka, Mississippi in 1916 but moved to Forest in 1924. He graduated from Forest High School in 1934, Mississippi State University in 1938, and Tulane Medical School in 1942. Shortly after graduating from Tulane, Doctor Bill entered the United States Army and served with the U.S. 3rd Army in Europe as a Battalion Surgeon. He participated in 5 major battles which began with the Normandy Invasion and ended in Yugoslavia on VE Day. Doctor Bill's service decorations included the Silver Star, two Bronze Stars, and the Purple Heart. At the Battle of the Bulge, he was known as the "Battling Surgeon."

Upon returning from Service in 1945, Doctor Bill began his medical practice with his father, Doctor R.B. Austin, II. At that time, most pa-

tient care was done either at the patient's home or in the doctor's office. It was not unusual for Doctor Bill to spend most of his day making house calls and treating patients. He had a bedside manner with his patients that truly reflected his love and concern for their well-being. Because of his caring attitude, Doctor Bill endeared himself to all the residents of Forest and Scott County that lasted until his final day of life. During his medical career, Doctor Bill delivered more than 3500 babies, most of whom were born at home.

Doctor Bill served as the first president of the Mississippi Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Veterans. It was he who stepped forward in 1994 to provide the leadership to form the state's first Battle of the Bulge Veterans group and helped organize the inaugural meeting of the group in Forest. He was a member of the Forest United Methodist Church and was an ardent Mississippi State University supporter. He was also a member and past president of the Central Medical Society. Doctor Bill was active in civic affairs and he and his wife were honored as Forest's "Citizens of the Year" and named grand marshals of the Christmas Parade in 1984.

Doctor David Lee, a medical colleague of Doctor Bill said that "he was one of the best general practitioners I've known. He was one of the most dedicated doctor I've been associated with." Doctor Howard Clark, a physician from Morton, Mississippi said both Doctor Bill and his father were wonderful doctors stating, "They were down-to-earth, ethical, people loving doctors." Sid Salter, editor of the Scott County Times said, "Doctor Bill died as he lived—a well loved and respected man. He did not talk patriotism, he lived it. He did not talk of healing. He used his head, heart and hands to bring it about in his fellow man regardless of their race, creed, color, or economic status. He did not speak of his service to mankind. He simply rendered it day by day."

Doctor Bill is survived by his wife Opal, daughters Sue Thigpen and Judy Webb, sons J. W. "Ace" Richard and Terry, their husband and wives, 14 grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, and many nieces and nephews. Doctor Bill was a great man. He loved the Lord, his family, his friends, his country, his state, and by all means Forest and Scott County. He served others to the best of his ability. It is my honor to pay tribute and express my appreciation and that of the 3rd Congressional District of Mississippi for his life of service and contributions to the betterment of our nation and all mankind.

SUN CHRONICLE IS RIGHT ON THE  
MONEY REGARDING NURSING  
HOMES

**HON. BARNEY FRANK**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 21, 2001

Mr. FRANK. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, March 10, an editorial in the Sun Chronicle, published in Attleboro, Massachusetts, accurately analyzed one of the major causes for the difficulties we are facing in providing decent nursing home care. As the editorial notes,