WEEMS GALLERY AND FRAMING

HON. HEATHER WILSON
OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring to your attention a woman in my home town of Albuquerque, New Mexico who has contributed much to our community. On March 20, 2001 Mary Ann Weems along with friends and family celebrated the 20th anniversary of Weems Galleries and Framing.

Inspired by her vision of a gallery that would warmly welcome anyone who found joy in art as an expression of life, Mary Ann began this journey toward excellence in the visual arts twenty years ago. Her first gallery was in a little-noticed shopping center, opened with borrowed money and lack of business experience. She won the confidence and trust of New Mexico artists and aficionados who joined in supporting her vision of making more art accessible to more people.

That vision led, 10 years ago to the first Weems Artfest, now the nationally ranked annual event which attracts thousands of families and children to see and experience New Mexico art. The Artfest also provides an affordable venue for all kinds of artists to gain exposure for their talents. The Artfest benefits the whole of New Mexico’s art community.

Mary Ann Weems earned her success in the visual arts the hard way, by trial and error and sheer grit. She achieved excellence in the visual arts by setting new standards for what a gallery can be and what an art show can become, and making her vision real for the whole of New Mexico’s art community.

By making art more accessible for children, Mary Ann gives every child who participates the chance to discover something wonderful in themselves. For children who face challenges, it’s a discovery gives them powerful hope for their future. Mary Ann serves as my Chairperson for the Congressional Art Competition.

Mary Ann Weems earned her success in the visual arts the hard way, by trial and error and sheer grit. She achieved excellence in the visual arts by setting new standards for what a gallery can be and what an art show can become, and making her vision real for the whole of New Mexico’s art community.

Please join me in recognizing the achievements of this business woman, Mary Ann Weems.

IN HONOR OF THE RETIREMENT OF LYNN SELMSER

HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE
OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize today Ms. Lynn Selms for over 27 years of service to Members of the House of Representatives. As Chairman of the Subcommittee on Education Reform of the Education and the Workforce Committee, I have worked with Lynn only a few years, but I can say that her reputation as a talented and knowledgeable member of the Committee staff is well deserved.

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS


Next, Lynn worked in the personal office of Pennsylvania Rep. Bill Goodling, her hometown representative. She stayed in Rep. Goodling’s personal office until January 1989, when she moved to the Committee on Education and Labor staff, which is now the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

During her time with the Committee, Lynn has educated me and many other Members of Congress on the intricacies of quite complex issues. She has covered issues and programs such as Child Nutrition, Impact Aid, Juvenile Justice, and child and adult literacy. I know all of the Members of the Committee will be at a disadvantage without her institutional knowledge and advice on these issues.

I believe that Lynn is most proud of her work on family literacy. Lynn worked on this issue on behalf of Rep. Goodling from 1988, when he originally sponsored what became the Even Start Act. She cares deeply about improving the literacy of adults as a way to improve literacy in children, and I understand that she plans to continue to promote adult literacy following her retirement from the Committee staff.

I know many Members of Congress and staffs, along with her friend and former boss, Rep. Goodling, join me in thanking Lynn for her many years of service and wishing her a relaxing and well-deserved retirement.

HONORING FAYETTEVILLE FIRE CHIEF DUKE “PETE” PINER

HON. ROBIN HAYES
OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Fayetteville Fire Chief Duke “Pete” Piner, who will retire on April 1, 2001, after more than 37 years of service.

Chief Piner, 63, joined the Fayetteville Fire Department in 1964, following his father into the firefighting profession after a stint in the United States Navy and working briefly as an electrician.

Almost 25 years to the day, on March 22, 1989, Piner became chief of the department. In the words of Fayetteville City Manager Roger Stancil, Chief Piner quickly established himself as a team player among city management. “His leadershipextended throughout the city,” said Stancil. “He was someone you could call on to accomplish a mission anywhere within the city government.”

Chief Piner’s vision led to innovations for the fire department. During his tenure, the Fayetteville Fire Department built new stations to expand its service area, successfully merged with volunteer fire departments in neighborhoods annexed by the city, developed a state-of-the-art hazardous materials response team, and began to utilize more modern technology. In fact, Chief Piner played a key role in modernizing the city’s communications capabilities so that various city departments, state, and county agencies could communicate with one another during a crisis or disaster situation.

I ask that all my colleagues join me in honoring Chief Duke J. “Pete” Piner for 37 years of remarkable public service to the people of Fayetteville, North Carolina.

A TRIBUTE TO JORGE MAS SANTOS

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure and admiration that I congratulate Jorge Mas Santos on being honored for receiving the National Community Service Award by the Simon Wiesenthal Center.

As the son of a Cuban immigrant, Jorge Mas Santos learned to appreciate the freedoms and opportunities in our country, and realized that the dreams of liberty and democracy that his father had for his native land of Cuba would never be possible under the tyrannical regime of Fidel Castro. His ambition to fulfill his father’s aspirations to help the thousands of Cubans migrating from the island seeking freedom has resulted in countless programs and activities that have benefited not only Cuban-Americans but also every citizen in South Florida.

Among his illustrious accomplishments, Jorge is the founder and chairman of Neff Rental; Chairman of the Board of the Cuban American National Foundation; Chairman of MasTec Inc.; and Executive Director of the Mas Family Foundation. Through this Foundation, the Mas Family Scholarships has awarded over $500,000 to students who had little hope of obtaining higher education. He is deeply involved in community and civic activities as a member of the University of Miami President’s Council and of Nova Southeastern University’s Board of Trustees. Jorge’s current multi-million dollar restoration project is to fulfill his late father’s dream of turning The Freedom Tower, which is included in the National Registry of Historic Places, into an educational center and museum, scheduled for completion in late 2001.

Jorge has achieved a multitude of honors. His love and dedication to the cause of freedom has touched the lives of so many and has won him respect and admiration. I want to join with his family, friends and colleagues in celebrating this wonderful award and I wish him every future success.

RE-OPENING OF SPAG’S OF SHREWSBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JAMES P. McGovern
OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join the community of Shrewsbury, Massachusetts in celebrating the Grand Re-Opening of Spag’s—a store that has become one of the biggest tourist attractions in New England.
INTRODUCTION OF THE GLOBAL HEALTH ACT

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY
OF NEW YORK
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Wednesday, March 28, 2001

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation to address an issue that is receiving much needed attention by the international community and the U.S. government. That issue is global health. Men, women and children all over the world are struggling with the impact of an HIV/AIDS pandemic in Africa that threatens to engulf parts of Asia over the next few years. That pandemic destabilizes regional security on every continent of the world. The former Soviet Union has one of the most rapidly growing number of HIV/AIDS cases in the world and has already overwhelmed its already faltering health care infrastructure.

The people of these and other developing countries are struggling with the fact that more than ten million children die before their fifth birthday each year from preventable diseases in developing countries. They are struggling with the continued impact of global infectious diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, polio and AIDS. Women in developing countries are 18 times more likely to die during childbirth than men. Over 80 percent of these deaths are due to complications that are routinely prevented in the developed world, such as obstructed labor, infections and unsafe births. 99 percent of these 600,000 deaths could be averted.

Despite these daunting facts, there is something we can do. Unprecedented opportunities exist today to improve health around the world and the U.S. must maintain its leadership role on these issues. It is in our interest to do so. Our borders are not impervious to these global health threats. To address these global health threats, I am introducing the Global Health Act of 2001.

During the 106th Congress, over 75 members of Congress and 152 organizations joined me in support of the Global Health Act of 2000 and we are reintroducing this legislation this year to reaffirm our commitment to improve the health of men, women and children around the world.

Today, I am joined by 52 of my colleagues in introducing bipartisan legislation to increase the U.S. commitment to global health by $1 billion dollars over FY 2001 appropriated levels. With these additional funds, our commitment to global health will be authorized at $2.55 billion.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the fifty-two cosponsors of the Global Health Act of 2001. These cosponsors represent a broad cross section of the House; Democrats and Republicans, and from the Progressive Caucus, the Black Caucus, Appropriators and Authorizers, who recognize the need and importance of an increased commitment to global health.

I ask that a copy of the Global Health Act be printed in the RECORD following my remarks.

We are joined in this effort by over 70 international organizations and two coalitions committed to global health, such as the Global Health Council, Save the Children, the Christian Children’s Fund, and the American Foundation for AIDS Research, and the list is growing every day.

I have included that list of the global health organizations, faith-based organizations and development NGOs that support this legislation and ask that it be entered into the RECORD.

What does the Global Health Act do?

The Global Health Act of 2001 provides an additional $1 billion to the global health programs of the Federal Government. This includes $275 million for HIV/AIDS, a $100 million increase for maternal health, a $200 million increase for family planning, an additional $1 billion to the global health programs that play an important role in improving the health of men, women and children around the world.

It also calls for increased coordination between the different government agencies administering health programs.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic is the greatest public health disaster to face mankind since the bubonic plague. Already, 58 million people have been infected or died as a result of HIV/AIDS and more than 95 percent of new infections occur in developing countries. Sub-Saharan Africa has been the hardest hit and in South Africa it is estimated that 10 percent of its 45 million people are infected with the virus.

But, the pandemic is not limited to Africa: Asia will soon have more new HIV infections than any other region and Russia is the new “hot spot” for the disease. The disease is ravaging families and communities and young people have been particularly devastated. Every minute, five young people contract HIV/AIDS somewhere in the world and in Southern Africa it is projected that more than half of today’s teenagers will become infected and die of AIDS.

UNAIDS has estimated that it would take $3 billion to address HIV/AIDS in Africa alone (excluding access to drugs) and at the same time the international community is providing less than $1 billion a year for HIV/AIDS programs in the developing world.

The world looks to the United States to be a leader and now is the time for the United States to significantly expand its support for global HIV/AIDS programs. The creation of new drugs and vaccines cannot stand alone and we must also invest in the development of public health infrastructure.

This infrastructure will be important as we continue to expand investment in treatment and care programs. In addition, 42 million children will be orphaned by HIV/AIDS by 2010 and we must be prepared to provide good health care to these children across the health spectrum.

All children of the world need our support. As we approach the 10-year anniversary of the World Summit for Children, we must make a strong commitment in their future by investing in the world’s children. Ten million children die before their fifth birthday each year in developing countries from preventable diseases, such as pneumonia, diarrhea and measles.

Yet, funding for the core child survival program remained fairly stable in the FY 2001 budget. Without additional funding, the successful child survival programs will not continue to provide needed services for young girls and boys in developing countries. Through its research and development programs, the United States has developed interventions that work. Clean water and sanitation prevent infections, and oral rehydration therapy (a simple salt sugar mixture taken by mouth, which costs only pennies) has been proven to be among the most effective public health interventions ever developed.

Immunization programs have also proven to be successful and almost 75 percent of children are immunized today in developing countries.

Annually, immunizations avert two million childhood deaths from measles, neonatal tetanus, and whooping cough. The success of these programs is striking and the U.S. should reaffirm its commitment to children as we meet with other world leaders at the UN Special Session for Children in September, 2001.

Another equally compelling problem that has not yet been given the recognition it deserves is the death of 600,000 women each year during pregnancy and childbirth—one woman every minute.

Over 80 percent of these deaths are due to complications that are routinely prevented in the developed world, such as obstructed labor, infections and unsafe births. 99 percent of these 600,000 deaths could be averted.

Of all the health statistics monitored by the World Health Organization, the figures on maternal mortality reveal the largest discrepancy between developed and developing countries.

Women in developing countries are 18 times more likely to die during childbirth than...