

money from prisoners and put it into a general fund without earmarking it for their victim are merely fines. Restitution in the true sense, requires that the offender directly compensate the victim and therefore require the offender to acknowledge their responsibility to the victim.

This legislation reforms FPI in a way that will allow us to do a better job of rehabilitating our rising inmate population and reducing the crime rate of released inmates. At the same time, it will help the U.S. economy and will be a better deal for the U.S. taxpayers. I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation, and support the FPI's mission to rehabilitate our inmates by providing an opportunity for inmates to gain meaningful employment skills and come out of prison as productive members of society.

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS OF
THE U.S. LEASING INDUSTRY

HON. JIM MCCRERY

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. MCCRERY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill that would eliminate a provision of the tax code which hinders the global competitiveness of the U.S. leasing industry.

The leasing industry is important to the U.S. role in the global economy. Our manufacturers use leasing as a means to finance exports of their goods, and many have leasing subsidiaries that arrange for such financing. Many U.S. financial companies also arrange lease financing as one of their core services. The activities of these companies support U.S. jobs and investment.

Enacted in 1984, the depreciation rules governing tax-exempt use property (referred to as the "Pickle rules") operate to place U.S. companies at a competitive disadvantage in overseas markets. Because of the adverse impact of the Pickle rules on cost recovery, U.S. lessors are unable in many cases to offer U.S.-manufactured equipment to overseas customers on terms that are competitive with those offered by their foreign competitors. Many European countries, for example, provide far more favorable depreciation rules for home-country lessors leasing equipment manufactured in the home country.

There is no compelling tax policy rationale for maintaining the Pickle rules as they apply to export leases. The Pickle rules were enacted in part to address situations where the economic benefit of accelerated depreciation and the investment tax credit were indirectly transferred to foreign entities not subject to U.S. tax through reduced rentals under a lease. That rationale no longer applies. The investment tax credit was repealed in 1986, and property used outside the United States generally is no longer eligible for accelerated depreciation. The present-law requirement that property leased to foreign entities or persons be depreciated over 125 percent of the lease term simply operates as an impediment to U.S. participation in global leasing markets.

The global leasing markets have expanded dramatically since 1984. The competitive pressures on U.S. businesses from their foreign

counterparts also have increased dramatically. Repealing the Pickle rules as they apply to U.S. exports will strengthen the competitiveness of the U.S. leasing industry and promote U.S. jobs and investment.

I am pleased my friend and colleague from California, Mr. MATSUI, is introducing similar legislation and look forward to working with him and others to unshackle the leasing industry from these outdated constraints.

WOMEN'S OBSTETRICIAN AND
GYNECOLOGIST MEDICAL AC-
CESS NOW ACT

HON. SUSAN DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Women's Obstetrician and Gynecologist Medical Access Now Act, the WOMAN Act. This bill will ensure that every woman has direct access to her ob-gyn.

When I served in the California State Assembly, I heard from many women that they were being denied access or had to jump through numerous bureaucratic hoops to see their ob-gyn. Statistics show that if there are too many barriers between a woman and her doctor, she is much less likely to get the medical care she needs. This is simply unacceptable. A woman should not need a permission slip to see her doctor. Ob-gyns provide basic, critical health care for women. Women have different medical needs than men, and ob-gyns often have the most appropriate medical education and experience to address a woman's health care needs.

It is not hard to see what a difference direct ob-gyn access makes in women's health care. Imagine a working woman in San Diego who has a urgent medical problem that requires an ob-gyn visit. She works forty-five hours a week and has limited sick and vacation time. On Monday she calls from work to make an appointment with her primary care physician. If she is lucky, she gets an appointment for Tuesday morning and takes time off to go see her doctor. Her doctor agrees she should be seen by her ob-gyn and gives her a referral. Tuesday afternoon she returns to work and calls her ob-gyn. The doctor is in surgery on Wednesday, but they offer her an appointment on Friday morning. On Friday she takes another morning off work and finally gets the care she needs. This unnecessary referral process has resulted in her taking an extra morning off work and delayed her proper medical care by 5 days. The patient, employee, primary care physician, and health plan provider would have saved money and time if the patient had been able to go directly to her ob-gyn.

A recent American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists/Princeton survey of ob-gyns showed that 60% of all ob-gyns in managed care reported that their patients are either limited or barred from seeing their ob-gyns without first getting permission from another physician. Nearly 75% also reported that their patients have to return to their primary care physician for permission before they can

see their ob-gyn for necessary follow-up care. Equally astounding is that 28% of the ob-gyns surveyed reported that even pregnant women must first receive another physician's permission before seeing an ob-gyn.

After meeting with women, obstetricians and gynecologists, health plans, and providers in the State of California, I wrote a state law that gives women direct access to their ob-gyn. That law was a good first step; however, it still does not cover over 4.3 million Californians enrolled in self-insured, federally regulated health plans. Clearly, this problem is not unique to California. There are still eight states that do not guarantee a woman direct access to her ob-gyn. Equally important to remember is that even if a woman lives in a state with direct access protections, like California, she may not be able to see her ob-gyn without a referral if she is covered by a federally regulated ERISA health plan. This means that one in three insured families are not protected by state direct access to ob-gyn laws. The time has come to make direct access to an ob-gyn a national standard.

I urge you, Mr. Speaker, and all of my colleagues to pass this critical legislation quickly into law.

FAIRNESS AND EQUITY FOR
SPOUSES OF FOREIGN SERVICE
OFFICERS

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 4, 2001

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to correct an inequity that affects a number of spouses of Foreign Service Officers in my district and throughout the nation who served in part-time, intermittent, or temporary positions (PITs) in American embassies and missions from 1989 to 1998.

Although countless Foreign Service spouses have given up their own careers to follow officers overseas, many of them hope to continue government service, whether assigned to an embassy or here in Washington. In fact, hundreds have gone to work for the Department of State as civil service employees while their spouses were serving domestically. When the time has come for Foreign Service family members to check their retirement status, many are shocked to hear that the years they worked overseas will not count for retirement purposes.

PIT employees are excluded from receiving credit in the Federal Employees Retirement System because of the generally non-permanent nature of their employment. However, Foreign Service spouses who worked as PITs had no choice over the type of work they performed. These individuals had to take PIT positions because these jobs were the only ones available to them while living abroad. They had no choice between part-time, temporary government work and full-time, permanent work. Even those who worked full-time were still classified as PITs.

The exceptional nature of their situation is reflected in the Department of State's reclassifying this group of workers in 1998 as falling