

I am proud to bring the anniversary of this important organization to the attention of Congress here today. The children of Maine and the nation have benefitted greatly from the leadership provided by MADSEC over the last 25 years. I look forward to continuing advances in special education administration and technology that groups such as MADSEC will facilitate. Children with disabilities must not be forgotten or allowed to fall behind. For the last 25 years, members of the Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities have worked to ensure such children get every chance they can to succeed. I thank them for a quarter-century of fine work, and look forward to their next 25 years.

HONORING WESTERN STATE COLLEGE GRADUATES, RICHARD AND GRACE NUGENT

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate two Western State College graduates. Richard and Grace Nugent will graduate in May with degrees in art and English. But they are not your typical grads. Richard is going on 69 and Grace will soon turn 64 years old.

Richard and Grace have been students at WSC since 1998. Grace attended college for the first time, while Richard is finishing his education, which was cut short in the 1950's. "We've always had some kind of goal—some kind of plan we were working towards," Grace said in a recent Denver Post article. "A lot of people our age figure they're done. We continually have something to look forward to."

Richard and Grace had been operating a bed and breakfast in Crawford, Colorado when they decided they needed a new challenge. They were not your ordinary nontraditional students. Instead of just attending classes, Richard and Grace decided to immerse themselves in the college experience. They moved into the dorms, ate college food and hit the hot college hang outs on Friday nights. "They blend in well. They seem to belong," said Robert Sewell, a student who works out with Richard.

"This is so great," Richard said. "Have you ever been in nursing homes? They're just sitting there. But look around here, there is life here." After graduation, Richard and Grace will start their new careers as English teachers in China.

Mr. Speaker, it is great to see two people so far along in life return to their youth. I want to congratulate Richard and Grace Nugent on their graduation and wish them all the best teaching English in China. I know they will put forth the same effort and enthusiasm with their new career as they did in college.

Richard and Grace, job well done!

TRIBUTE TO ENSIGN RICHARD J. BENSING

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ensign Richard J. Bensing, a member of the U.S. Navy EP-3 aircraft crew who was detained on the island of Hainan, China, last month following their harrowing collision with a Chinese F-8 fighter.

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of joining more than 200 people in welcoming Ensign Bensing back to his alma mater, Brandon High School, in my hometown of Hillsborough County, Florida. The crowd packed in the school's auditorium was evidence of the impact that last month's incident had on citizens across America.

The ordeal that Ensign Bensing endured may have occurred halfway around the world, but it captured the minds and hearts of the entire nation. The flight, and the eleven long days following, reminded us of the great risk that our men and women in uniform take every day to keep our nation free. Our service men and women, wherever they are stationed, represent the best of our country—they are our nation's sons and daughters. We can never take their sacrifice for granted, and in this case, we should be extremely grateful that Richard and the entire crew returned home safely.

I would like to commend Richard Bensing and all of his fellow crew members for the extraordinary dedication and professionalism they demonstrated throughout their ordeal. By your example, you have made us proud to be Americans. We are glad to have you home.

REINSURANCE TAX EQUITY ACT

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am joining my colleague, Representative NANCY JOHNSON, in introducing legislation to put an end to the Bermuda reinsurance tax loophole.

During the past few years, several Bermuda-based companies have either acquired a U.S. property-casualty insurer, or U.S. reinsurers have relocated to Bermuda. One reason for these actions was to allow insurers to avoid U.S. income tax on investment income by reinsuring their U.S. owned subsidiaries' reserves to a parent located in a tax haven such as Bermuda, which has no income tax. It works like this: the company pays a one-time 1 percent federal excise tax to reinsure offshore, and in return, the foreign reinsurer earns tax-free investment income on the transferred reserves for as long as they are held offshore. By escaping all U.S. income tax on investment income, these companies can have up to a ten percent pricing advantage over U.S. taxpaying companies in the U.S. in the "long-tail" insurance marketplace.

Mr. Speaker, such an advantage for some foreign companies over U.S. owned companies is patently unfair and should be eliminated immediately. Our legislation solves the problem by deferring the deduction for reinsurance premiums until the loss is paid in recognition that the primary insurance covers U.S. business risk. Again, this would only apply when reinsurance to parent companies in tax havens is used. Of course, these companies would have the option of being taxed like a U.S. company and thereby avoid this provision.

This is not a trade issue, as some would like to make it. The purpose of reinsurance is to enable property-casualty companies to spread risk among several companies. The practice of reinsurance allows greater access to insurance for consumers, promotes solvency in the marketplace, and helps ensure claims are paid to customers. But this is not the true purpose of the transactions affected by this bill. In these cases, reinsurance is written between related parties—a U.S. subsidiary cedes U.S. business to its foreign based parent—to obtain a tax benefit. No risk has been spread in this transaction, the company is simply moving money from one pocket to another pocket within the same corporate entity.

Mr. Speaker, this is clearly a very technical issue, but that should not stop Congress from moving quickly to shut down this loophole. If we do not stop this practice, other U.S. companies will be forced to relocate to Bermuda, or be bought by a Bermuda based parent, in order to stay competitive. This, in turn, will result in a significant reduction in U.S. corporate tax payments, and has implications not only for the property casualty business but also for affiliated corporations, especially life insurance companies, who could in theory benefit from this loophole.

Mr. Speaker, this may be simply one issue in a series of issues that may need to be addressed by Congress. For example, there is another, separate issue, emerging involving hedge funds and Bermuda insurance companies. When U.S. taxpayers invest in hedge funds, they pay taxes each year on realized profits, usually at the ordinary income tax rate. However, if they invest in shares of an offshore reinsurance company in a tax haven country like Bermuda, they pay nothing on trading profits until they sell shares of the company and those profits are taxed at the capital gains rate. Congress has taken the position several times over the past few years that investors should not get better tax treatment by investing indirectly than they would have gotten if they had made a direct investment in an asset. To quote one article, "The Bermuda reinsurance game is a thing of beauty. High-net-worth investors get the double tax advantage of investing in a Bermuda insurance company while literally capitalizing on hedge fund returns. Institutional investors that might be prohibited from investing directly in hedge funds can do so through an insurance company . . . You are effectively taking U.S. assets and moving them offshore. . . ."

Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to look generally at these issues. However, the matter at hand is one specific transaction that has been studied for a year at the Treasury Department, and it is time to either create fair competition

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for U.S. businesses, or declare that the U.S. government does not care if U.S. tax laws give a competitive advantage to foreign companies doing business in the United States.

BASE-SPONSORED VIOLENCE
PREVENTION WEEK

HON. FELIX J. GRUCCI, JR.

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. GRUCCI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and dedication of literally thousands of students, parents, teachers, school districts and officials of government from New York's First Congressional District who come together to promote and participate in the first annual Violence Prevention Week, May 1-7, 2001.

BASE, or Building A Safe Environment, is a grassroots community awareness group founded by Janine Giordano and Tracie Jedlicka.

BASE reached across to 11 school districts and communities to encourage children to be better people, more caring and considerate to one another, and active participants in making their neighborhoods a better place.

As the former Town Supervisor of Brookhaven, I worked with BASE on this worthwhile and important initiative.

Young people and community groups throughout the First District of New York and Suffolk County expressed their support by displaying lavender ribbons, creating banners and signs marking Violence Prevention Week, and held community meetings and student assemblies.

BASE's goal could have only been achieved through the hard work and support of many volunteers, parents, students, schools and government officials. These schools and groups include:

Miller Place, Rocky Point, Shoreham-Wading River, Comsewogue, Sachem, Longwood, Middle Country, Patchogue-Medford, Bellport, Bayport-Bluepoint and Commack, the North Shore Youth Council, Brookhaven Town and Suffolk County.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add my voice and that of the First Congressional District of New York in congratulating the fine work of BASE and all those who participated in making Violence Prevention Week in Suffolk County a success.

ACHIEVING POLITICAL STABILITY
AND BALANCE IN HAITI

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, on the heels of a successful OAS summit in Quebec, Canada, Haiti President Jean Bertrand Aristide has redoubled his personal efforts to include all parties in achieving political stability and balance in Haiti. In an effort to achieve this objective, on his return from the Summit, President

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Aristide, publicly stated, "This is the hour of dialogue, this is the hour of consultation, this is the hour of consensus, this is the hour of compromise. Our arms are open to receive all our citizens in mutual respect to continue to find those essential solutions for democratic growth."

Putting words into action, the President invited all opposition groups, as well as members of the private sector and civil society to meet with him at the National Palace on May 2, 2001 to "promote transparency and expand the dialogue toward a solution to the crisis resulting from the 2000 election."

Although 12 opposition groups accepted the invitation to the meeting, one of the opposition groups known as Convergence continues to refuse to meet and talk with the President. President Aristide invited Convergence representatives to meet at the Presidential Palace and work towards solutions in Haiti's remaining political and election issues. Despite this personal invitation and the President's demonstrated intention and willingness to work with all groups to establish the strongest possible democracy in Haiti, Convergence continues to refuse to participate.

President Aristide's efforts in this regard are consistent with his stated commitment to resolve this electoral situation as quickly as possible, and to get on with the governing of Haiti. In addition, the President's actions affirm his commitment made to President Bush and others to quickly resolve any remaining election issues in a fair and open manner that recognizes and protects the decisions already made by Haiti's voters.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE JACK L.
ROMANO

HON. JIM DAVIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to pay tribute to Jack L. Romano, a great leader in the Tampa Bay community, who recently lost his valiant battle with cancer at age 62.

Jack was known in Tampa for his selfless and tireless efforts on behalf of countless local charities and community organizations. Jack Romano lived his life to the fullest, always looking for ways to give back to his home. Whether he was volunteering as president of the Southwest Florida Blood Bank, or on the board of the Gulf Ridge Council of Boy Scouts, the Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce, Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla or the Tampa Museum of Art, Jack gave 110 percent. Jack didn't know the meaning of "half-way." His talent and dedication touched virtually every facet of our community and his limitless good deeds will continue to inspire others to follow his example.

Jack's character was equally inspiring. His kindness was always evident in his broad smile and his welcoming handshake. He never came upon a stranger, and he treated everyone he encountered with respect and appreciation. Jack Romano was truly a gentleman in the finest sense of the word. In business, fam-

ily and community, Jack was loved and respected.

Today, I would like to thank Jack Romano for dedicating his life to making Tampa and Hillsborough County a better place to live and work, and extend heartfelt sympathies on behalf of our entire community to the Romano family for their loss. Jack's departure is very much our loss too.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ADAM SMITH

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, due to the cancellation of my flight to Washington from my Congressional District on May 1, I missed the following 2 rollcall votes:

Rollcall No. 90, on H. Con. Res. 91, "Recognizing the importance of increasing awareness of the autism spectrum disorder, and supporting programs for greater research and improved treatment of autism," which passed the House 418-1. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

Rollcall No. 91 on H. Con. Res. 95, "Supporting a National Charter Schools Week," which passed the House 404-6 with 7 voting present. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

IN RECOGNITION OF KRISTIN
DEVAUL

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 8, 2001

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I come before you today to honor Kristin DeVaul of Mannington, West Virginia. Kristin has accomplished a most amazing feat, of perfect attendance, through the first 13 years of her education, from kindergarten all the way through high school.

North Marion High School is lucky to have such an outstanding student who is committed, to what she believes. Kristin, by attending every day, through sickness, conflict, and affliction, has shown that she truly believes in the importance of an education, and recognizes at an age when not all others do, the value of being educated. It is students like Kristin that make the fight for better educational standards worthwhile.

Marion County, West Virginia is home to a person with an amazing will to accomplish what she sets her mind to, and she will undoubtedly succeed in life with the strong resolve that she possesses. I would like to extend my congratulations for a job well done, and for an outstanding commitment to education!