

clear our commitment to finding bipartisan solutions to the ills that plague America's electoral process. Real election reform is a top priority for the American people and is the civil rights issue of the new millennium.

Unfortunately, I know the Election Reform Committee has heard a great deal about attempts to intimidate minority voters around the country during this past election. Having attended two of the Special Committee's field hearings, I know how important they are to uncovering the truth about voter suppression, and to ensuring we stop efforts to disenfranchise African American and Hispanic voters in the future.

It is clear that what happened in Florida to intimidate and suppress African American turnout was not an isolated incident. In fact, significant efforts to suppress the African American vote occurred in my district in Fort Worth this fall. I personally witnessed a systematic campaign by local Republicans to harass, intimidate and suppress African American voters—especially senior citizens.

With so many sad examples of voter intimidation and voting irregularities, the need for real action on election reform could not be clearer. After the field hearings are completed, Democrats will propose to the House real steps to make it easier for people to vote, expand participation in our democracy, and fix a broken system that has disenfranchised too many Americans for too long.

The importance of election reform to preserving the integrity of our democracy is so great that we must not allow partisan politics to keep Congress from addressing it. I thank Congressman WATERS for her strong leadership and for organizing this special order, and I desperately hope Republicans will join us in passing meaningful election reform to ensure every American's vote is counted.

TRIBUTE TO BERNIE ROBINSON

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Bernie Robinson who has served the State of Illinois and indeed all of us as the Assistant to the Governor of Illinois in charge of the state's Washington, DC office.

Bernie is about to leave his position for some exciting opportunities in the private sector. It would be inappropriate of me not to take this opportunity to publicly thank him for the work he has done, the counsel he has given and the lifetime's worth of friendships that he has made within our delegation.

Thanks to Bernie and his capable staff, the State of Illinois has emerged with the most cohesive voice that we have ever had in terms of pursuing opportunities for the people we serve. It would be impossible for me to list all of Bernie's accomplishments, but I cannot overstate the important role he played in helping to bring our delegation together in pursuit of appropriations projects and priorities for our state. Thanks to him, I have a better understanding of the special needs of my colleagues in the northern part of Illinois and they have a better understanding of mine.

Only one person could have brought together a delegation as diverse as the one we currently have. Without Bernie, it's unlikely that we would have had the successes that we have.

I know that the members and staff of the Illinois delegation join me in thanking Bernie and wishing him well in his new endeavors.

Bernie Robinson is a unique individual who has enriched our lives and allowed us to better understand who we are and how we can work together.

Thanks also to Bernie's children, Sarah and Army, who have allowed us to share so much of Bernie's time. Together with his beloved wife Bess, may God rest her soul, Bernie has proven that the greatest joy in our lives is the beauty and potential of our children. He has prepared them for a life of tremendous possibilities and all indications are that they are poised to tackle them.

Bernie, our thanks for establishing a foundation from which our delegation and therefore our state will grow and prosper. God's blessings to you and yours.

KEEP D.C. GENERAL HOSPITAL OPEN

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, we, as a nation, spend more on health care than any other country in the world. Yet, we have 43 million uninsured people and our working families continue to struggle to obtain quality and affordable care. And now, in our nation's capitol, there are efforts to close down the last remaining public hospital in the city, D.C. General. The closure of public hospitals around our nation and D.C. General, in particular, should be of concern to us all.

In Michigan, our public hospitals continue to serve patients and communities with dignity and with the belief that all people have the right to health care. These public hospitals provide our uninsured and underinsured working men and women with the quality and essential health care they deserve. D.C. General has been serving the people of Washington, D.C. since 1806, and the care it provides is crucial for residents of the nation's capitol.

I am deeply concerned with the impact the closure of this hospital will have on the residents of Washington, D.C. In Detroit and other urban and rural communities, affordable and reliable health care is becoming hard to find. Our public hospitals serve local communities without prejudice and are the only source of care millions in this nation can rely on. Now, the people of Washington, D.C. will have no choice but to turn to private hospitals for their health care—hospitals that base their care on a person's financial status and ability to pay.

Those who advocate closing D.C. General are concerned that the hospital has woefully inadequate funds to operate. The financial situation of this and other public hospitals is severely impacted by Congress' unwillingness to provide additional resources and the fact our public hospitals serve most of our uninsured

and poor. The plight of D.C. General is just one example of what will happen if we do not stand up immediately and support our public hospitals.

I am also deeply troubled by the process that determined the fate of D.C. General Hospital. Through the use of an unelected financial control board, those wishing to see the hospital closed overrode the democratically-elected D.C. City Council, who unanimously opposed the closure of the hospital. In 1999, a similar situation occurred in Detroit, when Lansing lawmakers dissolved the elected city school board and appointed a supervisory board, unaccountable to the citizens of Detroit. The Detroit school takeover and the D.C. control board's actions should be of concern to all Americans. Both these actions denied citizens a voice in the decisions affecting their lives. Our compassion and resolve to ensure quality health care and education for all must not be compromised by an unelected body which is accountable to no one.

Today, I join many of my colleagues in Congress, community leaders in my home state and from around our great nation, and champions in the Michigan State Legislature in urging that D.C. General be kept open and accessible to the people of Washington, D.C.

A TRIBUTE TO RABBI HILLEL COHN FOR 38 YEARS OF SERVICE TO CALIFORNIA'S INLAND EMPIRE

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to my good friend Rabbi Hillel Cohn, who for the past 38 years has been a remarkable community leader, and a spiritual guiding force for thousands of members of Congregation Emanu El in San Bernardino County, California. After nearly four decades as leader of this congregation, Rabbi Cohn is retiring this week.

Just a few weeks ago, Rabbi Cohn was present on this House floor to deliver our morning prayer. His message was a reflection of the central philosophy in his spiritual and community life: "Let America pursue justice in our enforcement of laws, in our forms of punishment, in our methods of choosing our leaders, in our allocation of precious resources, in our expectations of other nations, and in our daily relations with one another."

Throughout his career in San Bernardino County, Rabbi Cohn has served as a community conscience and a voice of unity for people of all races, religions and cultures. He was the founding chairman of the San Bernardino Human Relations Commission, and was selected in 1996 as one of 5,500 "community heroes" across the country who carried the Olympics Torch.

Rabbi Cohn's community involvement ranges from president of the county Mental Health Association and Family Service Agency, to serving on the bio-ethics committees of many local hospitals. He is a national leader in his faith, currently serving as treasurer of

the Central Conference of American Rabbis and serves on a team that counsels other rabbis. Many of his sermons have been published in "American Rabbi," and he has edited national books on rabbinical contracts and retirement.

I began my community service career on the local school board about the time that Rabbi Cohn became the spiritual leader in Congregation Emanu El. It was clear even then that he would be a force to bring all of the people of our community together. Throughout his career, his integrity and reputation for conciliation have shown through, and I am grateful for his wise counsel on many matters.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in thanking Rabbi Cohn for his years of service and leadership, and to wish him and his wife Rita good luck in their future endeavors. I am sure they will be active members of our community for many years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 1886

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce H.R. 1886, a bill aimed at closing an unfortunate administrative loophole and bridging a legal gap in the working of our intellectual property system. As you know, I chair the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts, the Internet and Intellectual Property. In that capacity, my colleagues and I have as one of our continuing goals making certain that the U.S. patent system is the finest regime in the world. This bill relates to two important areas within our jurisdiction, namely the procedures linking the courts and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO). This legislation eliminates an asymmetry in an administrative procedure disallowing the public the right to appeal a question from the PTO to a higher and independent authority for redress.

This legislation closes a procedural loophole that is a gap in the law. Today, many of these administrative appeals are prohibited by current law. In my view, this makes the patent system unable to fully serve the needs of inventors and the public. Congress created the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit in 1982 with a specific goal. It was intended to be a specialized forum that brings both legal and technical expertise to bear on appeals of certain issues of national importance, including patent issues. The overwhelming consensus is that in the past 20 years, the Federal Circuit has proven to be a marked success. It contributes to the fairness of the system in two ways. First, it ensures predictability and certainty to appeals within the subject matter of its jurisdiction. Second, it is a check on the agencies within its jurisdiction.

We have all heard stories about patents that issue but are subsequently challenged based on new evidence pertaining to scope and validity. This bill will ensure that the outcome of these challenges initiated by the public and consumers through the optional inter partes

reexamination will be fair by establishing the right to appeal and judicial review. It is a very limited measure and it does not lead to any additional district court trials, or other added discovery burdens or expenses for inventors. It is aimed at the improved functioning of our domestic system and has no relation to what our trading partners use in their systems. While this is admittedly a small bill—some will describe it merely as a housekeeping bill—I believe that it will contribute greatly to the improved functioning of our patent system for all parties involved.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL AUTHORIZING EXPANSION OF PU'UHONUA O HONAUNAU NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to authorize the expansion of the Pu'uhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park, which is located in South Kona on the island of Hawaii.

Pu'uhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park, formerly known as the City of Refuge National Historical Park, was authorized by an act of Congress on July 26, 1955 (60 Stat. 376) ". . . for the benefit and inspiration of the people . . ." The park was formally established in 1961. All the lands included within the park are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The overall management goal for the historical park is for the resources to accurately represent a slice of time ranging from pre-contact (circa 12th–13th century) to about 1930, when Ki'ilae Village was completely abandoned. The objectives developed to meet that goal focus on preservation, stabilization, and restoration of the park's cultural and natural resources.

A significant portion of the ancient Hawaiian village of Ki'ilae lies outside of the current park's boundaries. The proposed addition of 805 acres, located within the tradition land divisions of Ki'ilae ahupua'a and Kauleoli ahupua'a, contains significant cultural and natural resources, which complement the Park's mission of preservation and rehabilitation of Hawaiian natural, cultural, and historic resources. These lands contain at least 800 cultural sites, structures, and features; at least 25 caves (or cave openings), many of which are refuge caves; a minimum of 10 heiau (temples); more than 20 platforms; 26 enclosures; over 40 burial features (or highly probable burials); trails and trail remnants; a minimum of 6 residential compounds; a holua slide; several canoe landing sites; a water well; numerous walls and wall remnants; and a wide range of agricultural features.

Ancient Native Hawaiian burial sites are a particularly sensitive issue in Hawaii. Many descendants of the Ki'ilae villagers live in the area and want to make sure that the graves of their ancestors are respected and that archaeological and historical sites are preserved. The local community strongly supports incorporation of these lands into Pu'uhonua O Honaunau National Historical Park.

I urge my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring this bill.

ANNAPOLIS CENTER REPORT ADDRESSES KEY CONCERNS ABOUT ASTHMA

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 17, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I want to bring to the attention of my colleagues, an important report that was recently issued by the Annapolis Center for Science-Based Public Policy. Asthma is a serious disease that is often undetected, misdiagnosed and not properly treated. I am hopeful the Center's Executive Summary will help to enlighten my colleagues about the importance of addressing the problems associated with asthma.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report defines asthma, evaluates trends, and reviews how it is studied. It reviews potential triggers of asthma attacks and their proper management, which can dramatically decrease morbidity and prevent mortality. The report recommends prudent steps that decision-makers, doctors, and patients should take in combating the disease. Several major points of the report are as follows:

Asthma is a serious disease, with a great impact on public health and the economy;

Asthma has a disproportional impact in the United States on minorities, the poor, and children;

Asthma is a complex disease. We do not have a complete picture of asthma because we have an insufficient understanding of all the interacting mechanisms. Because of this, there is no universally accepted definition of the disease;

Because of the lack of a completely acceptable definition of asthma, it may be underdiagnosed or over-diagnosed;

We do not yet know all the causes of asthma. Genetic factors play a role but these alone do not explain the disease. The strongest (but incomplete) evidence exists for interactions between genetic factors, indoor environmental allergens and tobacco smoke; however, finding "the cause" (or causes) of asthma will take time and money.

Underlying causes, unlike immediate triggers, are speculative, or highly speculative, requiring much more research.

A national asthma registry is needed.

Action strategies aimed at eliminating some suspected environmental risk factors may reduce the prevalence of asthma attacks but are not guaranteed to reduce the incidence of new cases of asthma. There is evidence that dust mites, cockroaches, cat dander, spores of the common airborne mold, and Alternaria (a type of fungus) play an important role. It seems reasonable to clean homes, workplaces, and schools to reduce exposure to these triggers. This may not prevent all asthma attacks, but it may lessen their frequency and/or severity;

Asthma is a very manageable disease. Much of the current morbidity and mortality is avoidable;

Many asthmatics and their doctors do not take the disease as seriously as they should; Clinical guidelines for asthma treatment need to be followed;

Better disease management is the strategy most likely to yield benefits for asthmatics