

First, the diversion of these trucks onto state and local roads is destroying these roads. Most are not built to handle the wear and tear caused by heavy trucks which would not normally be driven on secondary roads. As a result, the State and local governments are forced to use scarce funds to meet high repair and maintenance costs. In a geographically large state where every transportation dollar counts, such expenditures drain funds away from other high priority projects. By contrast, the Interstate is designed to absorb the wear and tear caused by heavy vehicles, and I believe that is where they should be driving.

Second, having these trucks on secondary roads causes an extreme safety hazard. Heavy vehicles, such as tanker trucks carrying hazardous material and fuel oil, simply should not be traveling through communities with small roads, narrow intersections and difficult rotaries. Regrettably, there have been many accidents—some fatal—between large trucks and private vehicles on these smaller roads. The roadways are not designed to accommodate heavy trucks, whereas the Interstate system clearly is. I believe that getting these trucks back on the Interstate where they belong will enhance safety.

My bill will institute a 3-year pilot program during which time the federal weight limits will not apply to Maine's Interstate. During this waiver period, traffic data will be collected and reviewed by a Safety Committee headed by the Maine Department of Transportation. If the Committee finds that the waiver in fact has not negatively impacted safety, then the waiver will become permanent.

This important bill represents a good first step in solving this very real and very dangerous problem for Maine's people and Maine's roads.

INTRODUCTION OF SAFE PLAYGROUNDS ACT

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask that my colleagues join me in supporting legislation I introduced today that would ensure that our nation's playgrounds are safe and properly constructed throughout America.

As the school year ends and summer begins, children all around the United States will be spending more time outside playing with friends at our community playgrounds. While most kids enjoy horsing around at the playground, it can be a dangerous place if the equipment is either broken or not up to code. Every year more than 200,000 children are injured on America's playgrounds, and, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), 147 children died between 1990 and 2000 from playground equipment-related injuries.

In a 1998 survey, U.S. playgrounds received an overall grade of C— when rated on the presence of physical hazards and behavioral elements, including supervision and age-appropriate design. Mr. Speaker, many may think that this is an acceptable grade because

states, counties and local communities don't have any specific standards to follow when building playgrounds.

However this is not true. For the past several decades, the CPSC has written a very detailed national code to help states and local governments build the safest possible playgrounds. Unfortunately, only five states require that all public playgrounds in their respective communities abide by these standards.

My legislation, the Safe Playgrounds Act, would urge states to pass a law that assures that all playgrounds are safe for our kids.

The Safe Playgrounds Act will provide \$1 million grants to states that enact statewide laws regulating public playgrounds according to the CPSC's Handbook for Public Playground Safety. States could use these funds to either build new playgrounds or bring older ones up to code.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting our kids from playground accidents by cosponsoring this bill. Playground accidents will always be a reality, but by making these grounds as safe as possible, we can reduce those accidents that are not the fault of the child but of the playground itself.

MAGNOLIA JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the students and faculty of Magnolia Junior High School of Magnolia, Texas to Washington, DC. I would also like to recognize the students from Maywood Middle School who are visiting with them from my colleague, Congressman DOUG OSE's, district in California. These students have traveled over great distances to enjoy the many national museums and learn the significance behind the many historic monuments that are in this great city. I would like to wish them all the best and hope they relish this tremendous educational opportunity.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCIS M. FULKERSON, JR.

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I wish to pay tribute to Francis M. Fulkerson, Jr. who has retired from the Army Corps of Engineers in Napoleon, MO.

In 1956, Mr. Fulkerson began his Federal career as a student trainee with the Corps. Mr. Fulkerson accepted a full time position in 1958 as a Surveying Technician at the Napoleon Office Area. During his career, Mr. Fulkerson served the Glasgow Area Office, the New Orleans District, the Kansas City District Office, the Jefferson City Resident Office, and then returned to Napoleon in July, 1988. Mr. Fulkerson has served for over 40 years.

Mr. Speaker, Francis Fulkerson's federal career has been far reaching. I know the mem-

bers of the House, please join me in expressing appreciation for his years of service.

AMERICAN BREAKTHROUGH RESEARCH ACT OF 2001

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that I, along with my friend and Colleague Congressman BOB MATSUI, are introducing the American Breakthrough Research Act of 2001. This important legislation remedies a shortcoming in the federal income tax incentives available for research and development activities. To a considerable extent, our country's competitive position in the world economy and our citizens' standard of living are dependent on maintaining and enhancing our leadership in pure science and in the equally important commercialization of the fruits of scientific discovery. Over many years, the Congress and administrations across political parties consistently have supported tax incentives for those crucial activities.

Much of the risky and capital intensive work of developing the commercial potential of scientific findings is undertaken by relatively small and even start-up businesses. It often takes many years and many millions of dollars of investment to turn discoveries into products, and along the way these entrepreneurs tend to have few if any products to sell and little or no revenues. The U.S. bioscience industry, for example, which many call the industry of the 21st century is comprised of about 1200 companies, most of which are relatively small. While the medicines and treatments that these companies are developing hold great promise to reduce or eliminate major diseases such as cancer and cystic fibrosis, few companies can go to the market with products to sell.

A key goal of Congress in enacting and re-enacting the research tax credit and expensing provisions of the Code has been to foster this long-term intensive R&D work. Yet the fact is that many such companies derive no benefit from these provisions. As estimated by a major U.S. accounting firm, 95 percent of the Nation's biotechnology firms did not earn any profits in 2000. The existing research tax incentives thus fail to reach these companies because the incentives can be utilized only by companies that have significant profits and taxable income.

This is a fundamental problem that we need to address now. This defect in existing law puts these companies, which are critically dependent on investment to sustain their research, at a disadvantage in raising capital compared with other, often larger companies that do have current income. Without current access to these tax incentives, these smaller companies whose research activities are so vital to our Nation, are hard pressed to find needed capital.

The Crane-Matsui legislation fixes this shortcoming. It provides eligible long-term research companies with the opportunity to obtain a current benefit from these tax attributes through an election to claim a refundable tax

credit in exchange for relinquishing the research-related losses and credits. There is growing precedent for this type of proposal among the States, several of which have enacted or are considering similar provisions to provide research companies with a current benefit from otherwise unusable tax incentives. We hope our colleagues will join us in supporting this important legislation.

A TRIBUTE TO ANNE BLUE

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a remarkable young woman who spent a brief sojourn on this earth, but who has left giant footprints "on the sands of time." The life of Anne Blue reminds us that the measure of a person's life is not the quantity of years, but the quality of years on this earth.

Anne Elizabeth Candace Blue was born in Georgetown Guyana on June 14, 1956 and departed this life July 5, 1993. In her 37 years of existence, she rose to the heights of academic and professional achievement. She passed the Common Entrance Examination in Guyana and attended Bishop's High School. She migrated to England and entered the London Hospital School of Nursing where she graduated as a State Registered Nurse. She migrated to the United States where she obtained the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Hunter College and the Juris doctor degree from Hofstra Law School. She was active in various social, cultural and professional associations. She was a member of the Bishop's High School Alumni Association; founding member of the Caribbean American Bar Association; founding member of New York Reggae Music Festival Inc. She was a licensed Real Estate broker and Mortgage broker and, together with her parents John and Hyacinth Blue, she carried on a prosperous and successful Real Estate and Home Care business on Church Avenue.

Anne Blue "walked with kings, nor lost the common touch." She never lost contact with her native land and visited Guyana on an annual basis. As tribute to her patriotic and humanitarian commitment, her parents have created four Anne Blue scholarships in her memory—The Anne Blue National C.X.C. scholarship, awarded to individuals who obtained outstanding marks on the C.X.C. examination; The Anne Blue University of Guyana Law student scholarship, awarded to second year law students who obtain outstanding grades in their first year of law school; A scholarship to St. Gabriel's Elementary School, her elementary school alma mater; and a scholarship to Bishop's High School, her high school alma mater.

In the United States, the Anne Blue Scholarship Fund is sponsoring Project Amethyst, an academic enrichment program designed to help students to help students prepare for the specialized High School Admissions examinations. The participants begin the program in the 7th grade and continue through the 8th grade. They attend classes for four hours on

Saturday's where qualified teachers tutor them in the areas of English, Mathematics, Biology and Computer Science.

In paying tribute to Anne Blue, we also pay tribute to her remarkable parents, John Blue and Hyacinth Blue, who transformed their pain into triumph by preserving and perpetuating the memory of their remarkable daughter. They have named their Real Estate and Home Care business establishments in her honor, and have created a Scholarship fund, which opens the door of academic opportunity to underprivileged young people in Guyana and Central Brooklyn. In the words of Horace, "exegit monumentum, perennius aere"—they have built a monument more lasting than bronze.

FEDERAL FIRE FIGHTERS
DESERVE HEALTH BENEFITS

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of thousands of federal fire fighters and emergency response personnel nationwide who, at great risk to their own personal health and safety, protect America's defense, our veterans, Federal wildlands and national treasures. Although the majority of these important federal employees work for the Department of Defense, federal fire fighters are also employed by the Department of Veteran Affairs, and the United States Park Service. From first-response emergency care services on military installations around the world to front-line defense against raging forest fires here at home, we call on these brave men and women to protect our national interests.

Yet under federal law, compensation and retirement benefits are not provided to federal employees who suffer from occupational illnesses unless they can specify the conditions of employment which caused their disease. This onerous requirement makes it nearly impossible for federal fire fighters, who suffer from occupational diseases, to receive fair and just compensation or retirement benefits. The bureaucratic nightmare they must endure is burdensome, unnecessary and, in many cases, overwhelming. It is ironic and unjust that the very people we call on to protect our federal interests are not afforded the very best in health care and retirement benefits our federal government has to offer.

Today, Representatives CONNIE MORELLA (R-MD), JO ANN DAVIS (R-VA), and LOIS CAPPAS (D-CA) joined me to introduce bipartisan legislation, the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001, which amends the Federal Employees Compensation Act to create a presumptive disability for fire fighters who become disabled by heart and lung disease, cancers such as leukemia and lymphoma, and infectious diseases like tuberculosis and hepatitis. Disabilities related to the cancers, heart, lung and infectious diseases enumerated in this important legislation would be considered job related for purposes of workers compensation and disability retirement—entitling those affected to the health care coverage and retirement benefits they deserve.

Too frequently, the poisonous gases, toxic byproducts, asbestos, and other hazardous substances with which federal firefighters and emergency response personnel come in contact, rob them of their health, livelihood, and professional careers. The federal government should not rob them of necessary benefits.

The bipartisan effort behind the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 marks a significant advancement for fire fighter health and safety. Federal firefighters deserve our highest commendation and it is time to do the right thing for these important federal employees.

Thirty-eight states have already enacted a similar disability presumption law for federal firefighters' counterparts working in similar capacities on the state and local levels. The Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 is about parity for federal fire fighters; the same level of support provided to other important groups, such as teachers and police officers, should also be granted to these dedicated federal employees.

Mr. Speaker, the job of fire fighting continues to be complex and dangerous. The nationwide increase in the use of hazardous materials and the recent rise in both natural and man-made disasters pose new threats to fire fighter health and safety. The Federal Fire Fighters Fairness Act of 2001 will help protect the lives of our fire fighters and it will provide them with a vehicle to secure their health and safety.

I urge my colleagues to embrace this bipartisan effort and support the Federal Firefighters Fairness Act of 2001 on behalf of our nation's federal fire fighters and emergency response personnel.

SENSATIONAL SOCCER IN THE 6TH
DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, On May 26, the Sixth District of North Carolina became the home of the 3-A state championship girls soccer team—Southwest Guilford High School. The Cowgirls completed their victory run with a season record of 24-3. After winning state championships in 1995 and 1997, the team brought the title home again when they beat T.C. Robeson 4-1.

With a team that has the Regional Player of the Year Erin Sides, All-State Player and leading goal scorer Kelly Whitaker, Conference Defender of the Year Lauren Field, and Erin Gonzalez as the All-State Stopper, Southwest Guilford had a leading advantage in capturing the 3-A state title.

The Cowgirls won all five state championship title games. The final game was a scoreless tie at halftime. But the team remained united and was ready for the second half.

"We said at halftime, whoever scored that first goal is going to win the game," sweeper Lauren Field, one of three captains, told the High Point Enterprise.

The Cowgirls' Erin Sides, scored their first goal, only two minutes into the second half. Laura Allen drilled another goal three minutes