

English, was published in September 2000, in time for Germany's largest book fair in Frankfurt.

The blizzard of clips became an avalanche. Whitwell eight-graders came to Washington in March last year to visit the Holocaust Museum. They went home carrying 24,000 more paper clips collected by the Schroeders. Airport security had trouble understanding why a bunch of teenagers and their teachers were transporting boxes and boxes of paper clips to Tennessee.

#### LINKED TO THE PAST

Just a year later, the Holocaust project has permeated the school. The after-school group is the most favored extracurricular activity—students must compete in an essay contest for its 20 to 25 places. They've become used to being interviewed by local television and national radio. Foreign countries are no longer mysterious, with hundreds of letters bearing witness to them. The group's activities have long spilled over from Roberts's classroom. Across the hall, the students have created a concentration-camp simulation with paper cutouts of themselves pasted on the wall. Chicken wire stretches across the wall to represent electrified fences. Wire mesh is hung with shoes to represent the millions of shoes the victims left behind when they were marched to death chambers. And every year now they reenact the "walk" to give students at least an inkling of what people must have felt when jackbooted Nazi guards marched them off to camps. The students are blindfolded, tied together by the wrists, roughly ordered onto a truck and driven to the woods. "I was truly scared," recalls Monica Hammers, a participant in last year's walk. "It made me think, and it made me realize that I have to put myself into other people's shoes." Meanwhile, the counting goes on. It is daunting. On a late-winter day, as the picturesque valley floor shows the first shimmer of soft green, 22 students gather for their Wednesday meeting. All wear the group's polo shirt, emblazoned: "Changing the World, One Clip at a Time." The neat white shirts conform to the school's dress code: solid-colored shirts devoid of large logos, solid-colored pants, knee-length shorts or skirts, worn with a belt. Many of the girls have attached colored paper clips to their collars. These are no loose-mannered kids—they reply "yes, ma'am" and "yes, sir." Even lunch in the cafeteria is disciplined and relatively quiet. Yet, there is an obvious and warm bond between students and teachers.

The group's first item of business is opening the mail that has accumulated during the past three days. That takes half of the two-to three-hour meeting. A large package has arrived from Germany, two smaller ones from Austria and more than a dozen letters: Laura Jefferies is in charge of the ledger and keeps a neat record of each sender's address, phone number and e-mail address. One group of students responds to the e-mails sent via their Web site, [www.Marionschools.org](http://www.Marionschools.org). Roberts opens the packages, which have been examined in the principal's office to make sure they contain nothing dangerous. "We've had a few negative letters from Holocaust deniers, but we have never received a threat," says the silver-haired Hooper. "But even if we did, we would go on. We cannot live in fear; that would defeat the entire purpose." The large package, from a German school, contains about 40 letters, with paper clips pasted onto each page. Roberts sighs. "This is a huge amount of work," she says. "There are days when I wished we could just stop it. But it has gotten way beyond us. It's

no longer about us. There is no way we could stop this now." When the students fall behind, it's Roberts who spends hours sorting and filing. The students crowd around Roberts's desk and receive a letter at a time. They carefully empty all paper clips onto little piles. Drew Shadrick, a strapping tackle on the football team, is the chief counter and stands over a three-foot-high white plastic barrel, about the size of an oil drum. He counts each clip, drops it into the barrel, keeping track on a legal pad. Two other barrels, which once contained Coca-Cola syrup and were donated by the corporation, are filled to the rim and scaled with transparent plastic. "It takes five strong guys to move one of those barrels," says Roberts. Against the wall this day are stacks and stacks of boxes. In early February, an Atlanta synagogue had promised 1 million paper clips, and sure enough, a week later a pickup truck delivered 84 boxes bought from an office supply store. Half are still unopened.

All sorts of clips arrive—silver-tone, bronze-tone, plastic-coated in all colors, small ones, large ones, round ones, triangular clips and artistic ones fashioned from wood. Then there are the designs made of paper clips, neatly pasted onto letter paper. If removing the paper clips would destroy the design, the students count the clips, then replace them in the barrel with an equal number purchased by the group. The art is left intact. Occasionally a check for a few dollars arrives. The money goes toward buying supplies. Both Roberts and Smith won teacher awards last year, and their \$3,000 in prize money also went toward supplies, and helping students pay for what has become an annual trip to Washington and the Holocaust Museum.

The students file all letters, all scraps of paper, even the stamps, in large white ring binders. By now, 5,000 to 8,000 letters fill 14 neat binders. The letters are from 19 countries and 45 states, and include dozens of rainbow pictures, and flowers, peace doves and swastikas crossed out with big red bars—in the shape of paper clips. There are poems, personal stories.

"Today," one letter reads, "I am sending 71 paper clips to commemorate the 71 Jews who were deported from Bueckeburg." One man sent five paper clips to commemorate his mother and four siblings murdered by the Nazis in Lithuania in November 1941. "For my handicapped brother," says another letter. "I'm so glad he didn't live then, the Nazis would have killed him." For my grandmother," says another, "I'm so grateful she survived the camp." "For my son, that he may live in peace," wrote a woman from Germany. Last year, a letter containing eight paper clips came from President Clinton. Another arrived from Vice President Gore, a native of Tennessee, thanking the students for their "tireless efforts to preserve and promote human rights," but including no clips. Every month, Smith writes dozens of celebrities, politicians and sports teams, requesting paper clips. He gets many refusals, form letters indicating that the addressee never saw the request. But clips came in from Tom Bosley (of TV's "Happy Days" fame), Henry Winkler (the Fonz), Tom Hanks, Elie Wiesel, Madeleine Albright. Among the football teams that contributed are the Tennessee Titans, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the Indianapolis Colts and the Dallas Cowboys.

So many clips in memory of specific Holocaust victims have come in that one thing has become clear: Melting them into a statue would be inconceivable. Each paper clip

should represent one victim, the students believe, and so a new idea has been hatched. They want to get an authentic German railroad car from the 1940s, one that may have actually transported victims to camps. The car would be turned into a museum that would house all the paper clips, as well as display all the letters.

Dagmar and Peter Schroeder plan to travel to Germany next week to find a suitable railroad car and have it transported to Whitwell. They are determined to find such a car and the necessary funding. Like counting the clips, the task is daunting.

#### WHITWELL'S LEGACY

Whatever happens, for generations of Whitwell eighth-graders, a paper clip will never again be just a paper clip, but instead carry a message of patience, perseverance, empathy and tolerance. Roberts, asked what she thought she had accomplished with the project so far, said: "Nobody put it better than Laurie Lynn [a student in last year's class]. She said, 'Now, when I see someone. I think before I speak, I think before I act, and I think before I judge.'" And Roberts adds: "That's all I could ever hope to achieve as a teacher." She gives this week's assignment: "Tomorrow, I want you all to go, and sit next to a person at lunch whom you never talk with, a person that nobody wants to sit with at lunch, I want you to stop one of those people in the hall and say: 'Hi! What'd you do last night?' Now, don't make it obvious—they may know that it's just an assignment. That would hurt." Drew pipes up: "Well, I've already tried that, but that kid—that, you know, he just sits there and stares, what can I do?" "Keep at it—don't give up," says Roberts.

#### INTRODUCTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES FOR RURAL AMERICA

HON. JOHN M. MCHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, as a life-long resident of Northern New York, I have watched the 24th Congressional District thrive as a bustling arena of agricultural production, aluminum processing, automobile parts fabrication, paper-making, tourism and textile manufacturing.

Regrettably, in the last decade or so, the trends have been altered dramatically and the manufacturing sector—particularly in the Northeast—has diminished considerably. Furthermore, our small family farmers have seen a dramatic decline in the price they receive for their hard-earned production, forcing many of them to abandon their beloved way of life. The statistics, unfortunately, bear this out; earlier this month it was reported that Northern New York continues to have the State's highest unemployment rate. While the unadjusted statewide unemployment rate was 4 percent and the national rate was 4.1 percent, the rate in the ten counties in my rural Northern and Central New York District ranged as high as 9.1 percent.

Mr. Speaker, we are a proud and independent people who have long relied on our ingenuity and integrity to make our way through life. While we have accomplished

much through our resourcefulness, there is more that can, and must, be achieved to return greater prosperity to what we call "God's country." That is why I rise today to introduce a legislative package of rural economic development initiatives that I believe will create at least the initial incentives to bring new business and industry opportunities—and the attendant job creation—to our rural communities.

First, the use of high-speed Internet access is no longer limited to the wealthy or so-called computer techies. It has fast become a mainstay of everyday life, particularly in the business world. Accordingly, the first measure I am introducing, the Rural America Digital Accessibility Act, contains four incentives to help bridge the digital divide in rural America.

The technology bond initiative would provide a new type of tax incentive to help state and local governments invest in a telecommunications structure and partner with the private sector to expand broadband deployment in their communities, especially underserved rural areas. The broadband expansion grant initiative complements these bonds by utilizing grants and loan guarantees in underserved rural communities to accelerate private-sector deployment of high-speed connections so that our residents can access the Internet with a local, rather than a long-distance, phone call. The third initiative targets funding for research to increase rural America's broadband accessibility and make it more cost-effective.

With six four-year universities and colleges and seven two-year colleges within my District's boundaries, it only makes good sense for us to tap the expertise of our nation's educators to assist in our endeavors. Accordingly, the fourth incentive will help small- and medium-sized businesses connect with educational institutions that can provide technological assistance designed to improve the business' productivity, enhance its competitiveness and promote economic growth.

Second, to help our farm community, I am introducing the Agricultural Producers Marketing Assistance Act. This measure would establish Agricultural Innovation Centers on a demonstration basis and provide desperately-needed technical expertise to assist producers in forming producer-owned, value-added endeavors. It would also help level the financial playing field for producers by providing a tax credit for eligible farmers who participate in these activities. In this way, farmers and producer groups can earn more by reaching up the agricultural marketing chain to capture more of the profits their product generates.

Lastly, but certainly not least, I am introducing the Rural America Job Assistance and Creation Act. This a comprehensive measure designed to address a host of issues that have been identified as problematic for residents and businesses in rural America.

Because many small businesses lack the financial capacity to support the training of highskilled workers, this legislation establishes regional skills alliances to help identify needed skills and develop and implement effective training solutions. It also encourages cooperation between educational institutions and entrepreneurs who have innovative ideas but who cannot afford the legal and consultant fees necessary to convert their concepts into reality.

Another incentive involves an expansion of the work opportunity tax credit to include small businesses located in, and individuals living in, communities experiencing population loss and low job growth rates such as those found in rural Northern and Central New York. Approximately 100 such communities would be designated, subsidizing some 8,000 jobs in each area.

Mr. Speaker, when employees face layoffs or the shutdown of their place of employment, thereby losing some or all of their family income, the one thing that provides them some small sense of security is severance pay. While this is without a doubt a welcome helping hand in a time of need, unfortunately, the recipients often lose a third of their severance pay to taxes because they are pushed into a higher tax bracket. My legislation excludes from gross income up to \$25,000 of any qualified severance payment, limited to payments of \$150,000 or lower.

When a company that employs 100 or more workers makes the decision that it can no longer stay in business or must reduce its workforce, the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification, or WARN, Act requires 60 days advance notice of a major layoff or plant closing. As part of the notification requirement, current law states that notice be served upon, among others, the applicable State dislocated worker unit and the chief elected official of the appropriate unit of local government. I believe we must expand the notification process to include, as well, the appropriate Federal- and State-elected officials, i.e., U.S. Representatives and Senators and State Legislators. The expansion included in my legislation serves two purposes: (1) to alert these officials to the situation and the impact it will have on workers and the community and (2) to provide these officials with the opportunity to assist in determining if State and/or Federal resources are available and can be utilized to prevent closure or layoffs and the loss of employment opportunities. As publicly-elected officials, we have access to many avenues that may lend assistance at this troubling and uncertain time.

Mr. Speaker, my Congressional District borders the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec, and we consider Canadians to be not only our neighbors to the North, but our friends, as well. One valuable benefit of this association is the symbiotic relationship we have nurtured in the area of economic development and job creation. Unfortunately, the current immigration visa procedures for H-1 B professional speciality workers often complicate the employment related travel of Canadians to the United States and preclude what should be a seamless and unencumbered process. In September 2000, the General Accounting Office reported that Immigration and Naturalization Service decisions about the priority of H-1 B applications in comparison to other types of petitions handled by INS have resulted in delays of several months in processing employers' requests for H-1 B workers.

Delays of this nature mean that businesses across the nation, but particularly in Northern New York, are placed at a disadvantage. In my border communities, workers oftentimes travel mere miles to cross the border to provide the skilled labor needed by American companies. In these instances, there appears

to be no justification for the onerous delays they face in gaining timely entry into the United States to perform their duties. To streamline this process, the GAO recommends elimination of the separate requirement that employers first submit a Labor Condition Application (LCA) to the U.S. Department of Labor for certification and then to the INS along with their petition for H-1 B workers. My legislation corrects this situation. In addition to submitting the LCA to Labor, employers would be required to submit the immigration petition and the LCA simultaneously to INS, which will continue to review and evaluate the information contained on both the LCA and the petition.

Another component of the package I am introducing will give statutory authority to the already-existing National Rural Development Partnership and State Rural Development Councils. The NRDP and its principal organizational component, the SRDCs, were established a decade ago to help rural community leaders, government policy makers, agency program administrators, rural development practitioners, and citizens address a long-standing problem—the lack of coordination in identifying rural community needs, planning solutions to meet those needs, and implementing those solutions. State Rural Development Councils currently exist in 40 States, including the State of New York. While neither the Partnership nor the Councils make policy and generally do not administer programs, the key to their success has always been collaboration—bringing together funds, knowledge and individuals to assist rural communities. They have helped generate local solutions to rural development needs and a specific authorization would help establish a dedicated and predictable funding source for their activities.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. travel and tourism industry is one of America's largest employers and my Congressional District is no exception to that statistic. Northern New York State contains some of the most scenic and environmentally-unique lands in the entire nation: The Adirondack Mountains, the St. Lawrence River Valley and Seaway, the Champlain Valley and the Thousand Islands region. Tourism is a critical component of our economy and is universally recognized as a significant contributor to the region's visibility, economic development, and overall quality of life. But the full potential of the industry remains untapped. Some of the factors that have limited the benefits to be realized from the tourism industry include the vastness of the region, the compartmentalization of its assets and resources and, perhaps most importantly, the lack of regular data upon which to base policy or marketing decisions.

While considerable effort has been undertaken at the State and local levels to promote development and jobs for the region, as well as to market and promote the abundance of tourist related attractions and events, we continue to lack integration of current economic development efforts with the tourism potential of the region.

It is for these reasons that I am proposing establishment of the Northern New York Travel and Tourism Research Center at the William C. Merwin Rural Services Institute at the

State University of New York at Potsdam, New York. The Center would fill the critical deficiency we face and play a crucial role in the economic revitalization of Northern New York.

The final element of my job creation and assistance legislation mandates the General Accounting Office to examine and report to Congress on how best to address the long-term problems resulting from a lack of infrastructure and a lack of venture capital in rural areas. The study will focus on the need for expanding existing economic development and small business loan/grant programs and will include tourism and agriculture-related projects. The study will help us better identify the problems that presently exist and evaluate how infrastructure, venture capital and federal programs can be better utilized to enhance rural areas.

Mr. Speaker, during the nearly nine years I have been honored and privileged to represent the residents of Northern and Central New York in the U.S. House of Representatives, I have joined in a wide variety of efforts to help revitalize rural America—from tax relief for individuals and the business community, protection and enhancement of the environment and addressing our energy problems to preserving our health care system, promoting fair international trade and enhancing transportation opportunities.

Most recently, since the start of the 107th Congress in January, I have spearheaded several efforts to help rural America and its citizens. I am involved in legislative initiatives that would assist our communities recover and develop property known as brownfields, and are designed to complement broader, more comprehensive brownfields legislation moving through Congress. The Brownfields Redevelopment Incentives Act provides direct federal funding, loans and loan guarantees, and tax incentives to increase the amount of support available to assess and clean pieces of abandoned, idled, or underused property where expansion, redevelopment, or reuse is complicated by environmental contamination or perceived contamination.

I have also joined with several of my House colleagues from New York in introducing the Acid Rain Control Act. By reducing sulfur and nitrogen emissions, the measure would result in more than \$60 billion in annual benefits by providing improvements to human health, visibility, aquatic and forest ecosystems, and buildings and cultural structures. At the same time, the EPA estimates costs associated with implementation of the Act to be about \$5 billion. I think it is safe to say that this is the kind of cost-effective legislation we strive to achieve, with 12 times the benefits for the costs involved.

A third initiative I introduced earlier this year, the Self-Employed Health Affordability Act, provides for the full deductibility of health insurance costs for the self-employed. Current law provides for 100 percent deductibility in 2003, but we need to make the change immediately in order to bring relief to the many hard-working small business and farm families who must pay their own health insurance premiums. Coupled with estate tax reform, rate reductions and pension improvements, among other tax code changes recently enacted into law, this is another step toward helping our taxpayers keep more of their hard-earned

money and decide for themselves how it should be spent.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, my constituents are proud and resourceful. They, too, have continued to take the initiative to help themselves and their communities develop the tools necessary to fulfill our mutual goals.

The economic development package I am introducing today is simply one more step, albeit of a more comprehensive nature, that I am taking in a long line of legislative initiatives designed to assist our communities manage the wide-ranging challenges faced by rural America in the 21st century.

REMEMBERING WAYNE CONNALLY

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Texas Senator Wayne Connally, my friend and colleague with whom I served in the Texas State Senate, who died on December 20. Wayne was a member of the famous Connally political family and the brother of the late Governor John Connally and Judge Merrill Connally—and was an esteemed public servant in his own right.

Wayne was born and raised in Floresville, Texas, and educated in public schools in Floresville and San Antonio. He attended the University of Texas at Austin before enlisting in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II, after which he ranched in his native region. He viewed public service as a tenet of good citizenship and was elected to the Texas House of Representatives in 1964 and elected to the Texas Senate two years later. He represented Senate District 21 from the 59th through the 62nd Texas Legislatures and was honored by his peers as “Governor for a Day” on October 7, 1971. I served with Wayne in the Texas Senate. He was a terrific Senator—totally dedicated and, determined to represent his District and the State of Texas. Wayne was also so very capable of friendship, and he was always responsive to anyone in need.

Wayne’s over-riding goal was to uphold integrity and responsibility in government. He worked with his brother, Governor Connally, to create the first upper-level higher education institution in Laredo in 1970, the first step toward establishing Texas A&M International University in 1993.

A tall, imposing figure who spent his life working as a rancher and a public leader, Wayne embodied the Texas persona—and he leaves behind a legacy of faithful service to the people of his native state that he so loved. He will be missed by his many friends and family, including his children, Wyatt, Pamela and Wesley; four grandchildren; his brother, Merrill Connally; and sister, Blanche Kline.

The Texas State Senate introduced a resolution on March 19, Wayne’s birthday, recognizing his many contributions during his years of public service and his devotion to the State of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as the House adjourns today, I ask that my colleagues from Texas and in the Congress join me in also paying tribute to this outstanding American, the late Wayne Connally.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MRS. AUDREY WEST

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in paying tribute a very special person, Mrs. Audrey West, who will be honored at a Gala Retirement Celebration on Friday, June 29, 2001 by the Newark Preschool Council, Inc. Board of Directors and Head Start Policy Council for her eleven years of dedicated service.

Audrey West began her Head Start career in September 1990. She has brought a wealth of administrative experience in providing social services and human development strategies to the operational goals of the Newark Preschool Council. Mrs. West’s leadership encompasses a broad vision and wide range of knowledge, expertise, mobilization skills and community strengthening approaches, which were vital to the successful implementation of new programs demonstrating the mission of the Newark Preschool—to prepare our children to enter kindergarten READY TO LEARN READY TO READ. As the Executive Director of the Newark Preschool Council, Mrs. West has led an agency that is on the cutting edge of the national movement to develop family advocacy and sound educational beginnings for our children as they begin their successful journeys toward good citizenship. Mrs. West’s accomplishments, role modeling and mentorship certainly serve as an outstanding example of generosity and community involvement.

A native of Trenton, New Jersey, Audrey West received her Bachelor of Arts Degree from Howard University, Washington, D.C. Ms. West holds a Master’s Degree in Public Administration from Rutgers University. She served ten years as the Director of the Newark Division of Public Welfare (1968–1978) and ten years as the Deputy Director and Director of the New Jersey Division of Public Welfare in the Department of Health and Human Services (1978–1988). A true pioneer, she was the first African American to serve in these positions. Audrey West was also Special Assistant to the Commissioner in the New Jersey State Department of Personnel (1988–1990).

Mr. Speaker, we in New Jersey are so proud of Mrs. West and it is a pleasure to share her achievements with my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives. Please join me in expressing our congratulations to her for a job well done and our best wishes for continued health and happiness as she begins a new phase of her life.

TRIBUTE TO ROSANNE BADER OF POMONA, CALIFORNIA

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute and honor the