

On February 7, 2005, President Bush introduced his fiscal year 2006 budget. I was pleased that the budget includes an updated reauthorization proposal funding Federal highway, transit and highway safety programs at \$283.9 billion over 6 years in guaranteed funding. This is a \$28 billion increase above the proposal introduced by the administration 2 years ago, and I applaud the administration's recognition of the pressing needs of America's highways and transit systems in this higher number. The bill I introduced also funds the same programs at \$283.9 billion in guaranteed funding over 6 years, 2004 through 2009. I strongly believe that we have a much better chance of moving this legislation quickly in the 109th Congress, now that we are working with the same top line funding level that the President has endorsed.

The other reason that this \$283.9 billion guaranteed funding level may sound familiar is that it was the total 6-year guaranteed funding level that was under discussion in last year's conference negotiations. I am committed to getting back to conference as fast as possible.

There are no major policy changes between this bill and last year's authorization bill, which passed the House by a vote of 357 to 65 on April 2, 2004. The policies in H.R. 3 represent months of intense negotiations within the committee, with other House Members, and with stakeholder organizations.

I will work closely with the leadership, the Ways and Means Committee chairman, and the chairman of the Budget Committee as we further refine this bill and prepare for committee markup and floor passage. I urge the House membership's strong support of TEA LU, particularly since we now have the administration's endorsement of the total funding level.

Let's get this job done, so that our Nation's commerce can move quickly and efficiently, commuters can get to work faster and easier, waste less gas sitting in traffic, and spend more time with their families. States, communities, workers and industries around the country are waiting for us to act on this reauthorization. Let's get it done.

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the centennial of Rotary International. On February 23, 1905, four Chicago businessmen, Paul Harris, Silvester Schiele, Gustavus Loehr and Hiram Shorey, formed the first Rotary Club, which they hoped would foster fellowship and community service. Three years after the first Rotary Club was established, the second club was founded in San Francisco. Rotary now has a presence in 165 countries around the world.

Guided by the principle of "service above self," Rotary has devised a four way test for its members. Rotarians ask of the things they say or do: Is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build good will and better friendships and will it be beneficial to all concerned.

Rotarians perform all actions regardless of political affiliation or ethnicity.

Our distinguished colleague the Honorable Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill was widely known for his friendly admonition that all politics is local. This is true for Rotary whose global reach begins at the local level. In 1985, local Rotary Club members pledged to stamp out polio with the PolioPlus campaign. Since then, Rotarians have raised hundreds of millions of dollars to vaccinate people all over the world with the goal of eliminating polio by the end of this year. Rotary International is also playing an active role in responding to the tsunami and earthquake victims in South and Southeast Asia. I am proud to announce that Rotary District 5150, of which my Congressional District is part of, has responded by donating over \$50,000 to the relief effort in the month following the disaster. Rotary District 5150 has set a noble goal to raise \$250,000 for tsunami relief, and is also attempting to establish a "Rotary village" of permanent dwellings in Sri Lanka.

The Rotary Club is also the largest privately funded source of international scholarships. Each year, over 1,100 university students receive some \$26 million in scholarships for the Rotary Ambassador Scholarship. Since its inception in 1947, over 30,000 extraordinary men and women from over 100 nations have benefited from the Rotary Ambassador Scholarship and have used such a wonderful opportunity to promote global understanding and solidarity. Each year, Rotary District 5150 contributes to this deserving program by sending an exceptional student abroad with an Ambassador Scholarship. It is through these generous grants and other scholarships, that the Rotary empowers a new generation of leaders, furthers peace in the global community and upholds service as the highest of ideals.

Mr. Speaker, because Rotary International recognizes the importance of a global worldview, it has recently launched Rotary Centers for International Studies at eight prestigious universities worldwide. These Rotary Centers offer graduate degrees in peace and conflict studies to a group of 70 Rotary World Peace Scholars chosen annually in a worldwide competitive selection process.

As well as supporting higher education, Rotary is fighting illiteracy worldwide. Of particular note is Rotary's literacy program in Thailand. Lighthouses for Literacy, has proven so successful that the Thai government has adopted Rotary's method fighting mass illiteracy.

Mr. Speaker, Rotary has grown exponentially from the humble beginnings of 4 men working to foster fellowship and community service, to a multinational organization of 1.2 million men and women who belong to more than 29,600 clubs worldwide. At home and abroad, Rotary International members are bringing positive change to their communities; I applaud their many efforts to strengthen our social fabric.

I would like to extend special congratulations to the clubs in Rotary District 5150, which encompasses much of the Bay Area. Many of these clubs are located in my Congressional District. I have had the pleasure to meet with many members of District 5150 and count Rotarians as my friends. It is a great

honor for me today to recognize their many services of goodwill to their communities and celebrate this important milestone. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Rotary International on their centennial anniversary.

CONGENITAL HEART DEFECTS
(CHD)

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, February 14, 2005

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because February brings to mind a time of year dedicated to hearts in the form of chocolates, cards, candies and sweet mementoes. Very little attention, however, is given to the health and the condition of the actual heart these candies and mementoes symbolize: the human heart of a loved one. It is imperative that we pause during this season to recognize the importance of cardiac health in our children, families, and loved ones.

There are nearly one million adults and children living with Congenital Heart Defects (CHD) in the United States alone, and his number continues to rise as nearly 40,000 children are diagnosed each year. Despite these figures, very little recognition is given to the victims and families of those suffering from CHD. Many of the children born with CHD are not diagnosed until days or even months after birth. This lack of detection endangers those who live without knowledge of their illness.

Among the many infants affected, the symptoms drastically range in severity and medical costs. Some children are barely affected by their defect, requiring nothing more than occasional monitoring. However, there are also families placed under the heavy emotional and financial burden of a severe heart defect that requires lifelong medical attention. The cost of multiple open heart surgeries, drugs, and raised insurance premiums becomes a special problem for low income families. Numerous organizations provide these families with support and financial aid to protect their loved ones, but these groups are only able to help a small percentage of people due to the lack of national recognition of CHD.

Raising a national consciousness about the defects and their effects will provide hope and comfort for those who have struggled with heart defects. Jeanne Imperati, the loving mother of a child with a heart defect, had the foresight in 1999 to begin a campaign focused on spreading awareness through a Congenital Heart Defects Awareness Day on February 14. On a day already dedicated to hearts, it is a simple and meaningful endeavor to remind the nation of this worthwhile cause. More attention can be given to the regularity of the defects and research about their possible cause. Creating a network of informed people throughout the nation is a simple way to provide support for survivors and their families.

While we go about the tradition of honoring loved ones this Valentine's Day, let's also give our support to those affected by Congenital Heart Defects and their cause. Awareness is the first step toward saving lives and protecting those whom we love.