

Even in its humble beginnings, Dr. Hobbie knew the importance of building the newspaper's reputation and credibility among readers, and saw that it promptly appeared at noon each day. The Tonawanda News went on to be run by the first female publisher in New York state, Mrs. Ruby Hewitt, who played an important role in the growth and prosperity of the paper.

Over the last 125 years, the paper's circulation and reputation have grown tremendously; and all the while, the Tonawanda News and its staff have strived continually to provide the residents of the Twin Cities with accurate and timely news and information. Today, the Tonawanda News is known as one of the most reliable and accurate newspapers in Western New York. The journalistic standards that Dr. Hobbie, Mrs. Hewitt, and others instilled in the paper's staff over the years have not been forgotten; the paper remains committed to the values upon which it was founded, and the rich tradition that it has built.

I would like to offer my congratulations to the publishers, editors, and staff of the Tonawanda News, past and present, for all their hard work. I hope and expect that our "Home-town Newspaper" will be around for another 125 years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that this Congress join me in celebrating the 125th Anniversary of the Tonawanda News.

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#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 17, 2005*

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit this statement for the record and regret that I was unavoidably detained on Thursday, March 17, 2005 during Rollcall Vote Nos. 82 and 83 on H. Con. Res. 95, as well as Rollcall Vote No. 84 on H. Con. Res. 32. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on Rollcall Vote No. 82, an amendment offered by Congressman OBEY to H. Con. Res. 95, "no" on Rollcall Vote No. 83; an amendment offered by Congressman HENSARLING to H. Con. Res. 95, and "aye" on Rollcall Vote No. 84 on H. Con. Res. 32, expressing the grave concern of Congress regarding the occupation of the Republic of Lebanon by the Syrian Arab Republic.

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#### INTRODUCING THE "SMALL BUSINESS EXPENSING PERMANENCY ACT OF 2005"

### HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 17, 2005*

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago Congress, working together with President Bush, enacted into law the Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003. Among other provisions, the law strengthened and expanded the expensing provisions afforded to small businesses under Section 179 of the In-

ternal Revenue Code. As such, the law encouraged small businesses to make new capital investments, thus spurring our economy and creating jobs. I believe Congress should make this provision permanent and today I am introducing the "Small Business Expensing Permanency Act of 2005" to do just that.

Specifically, the Jobs and Growth Act increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000 the amount of new investment a business can expense—or deduct from income—in a given year. The law also increased—from \$200,000 to \$400,000—the amount of total investment a business can make in a year and still qualify for expensing under Section 179. Unfortunately, under current law, these provisions are set to expire after 2007.

My legislation will repeal the 2007 sunset. If the higher expensing limits are good for our nation's small businesses over the next two years, they should be good for small businesses indefinitely.

Small businesses truly are the backbone of our economy, representing more than half of all jobs and economic output. We should not take small business vitality for granted, however. Rather, our tax laws should support small businesses in their role as the engines of innovation, growth, and job creation.

Mr. Speaker, in difficult economic times, we must do all we can to encourage new investment and job creation by creating certainty and predictability for America's small business owners. The "Small Business Expensing Permanency Act of 2005" will help accomplish this worthy goal. I applaud the Administration for its consistent leadership on this issue, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to enact this much needed legislation.

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#### RECOGNIZING THE LIFE OF MRS. BOY JIN WONG

### HON. HILDA L. SOLIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 17, 2005*

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor the life of Mrs. Boy Jin Wong who passed away on Saturday, March 12, 2005. A resident of West Covina for nearly 50 years, Mrs. Wong was a businesswoman, breast cancer survivor, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother and wife.

Mrs. Wong and her husband, Bing Tew Wong, opened the Great Wall restaurant in the 1950s just as West Covina was growing from less than 5,000 residents to more than 50,000 residents. Her son, Council Member Ben Wong, said "despite her limited English language skills, countless Great Wall customers will remember being warmly greeted by her and her enduring smile." When the Great Wall closed its doors in 2001, then Executive Director of the West Covina Chamber of Commerce, Fred Burkhardt, stated "the Great Wall is an institution of West Covina that is going to be severely missed."

Mrs. Wong is remembered as a generous person and someone who treated everybody as if they were honored guests. Mrs. Wong and her husband donated money for scholarships and to build a school in their home vil-

lage in China. She was an active member of the community, participating and contributing to numerous local organizations and charities.

It is with pleasure that I honor the life of Mrs. Boy Jin Wong. She will be greatly missed by her family, friends and community.

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#### COMMENDING THOSE WHO FIGHT BLINDNESS IN AMERICA

### HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 17, 2005*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize the wonderful work of The Foundation Fighting Blindness, The National Eye Institute and Prevent Blindness America, and I want to commend all patients affected by vision impairment and blindness for their perseverance and courage.

I want to express my admiration for Betti and Carlos Lidsky, who are the National Trustees of The Foundation Fighting Blindness, and whose lovely family has been affected by a degenerative eye disease. They are great examples of perseverance and commitment to the cause of fighting blindness and are outstanding national leaders.

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Vision Caucus, I join my colleagues in the constant effort to help individuals who suffer from vision loss.

My home state of Florida has the highest proportion of senior citizens in the United States, and it ranks fifth regarding the number of people at highest risk of developing blinding eye disease.

Vision impairment is a very significant health problem in our nation, despite being a preventable condition in half of the cases. It has been estimated that the cases of vision impairment and blindness can double by the year 2030 if there is no intervention.

We, as a society, have a profound responsibility to intervene and to take action in order to enrich the lives of those currently suffering from vision impairment and to prevent others from developing visual problems in the future.

We must continue to raise public awareness about the dimension of this problem, and to encourage prevention. In addition, we need to improve access to quality vision care, treatment, and rehabilitation services. We need to support continued education, research, and advocacy efforts.

We have had tremendous breakthroughs in research leading to improvements in the treatment of certain visual conditions, which improve the quality of life for many visually impaired patients. More research can be done, and we will enjoy more success. The National Eye Institute has been committed to promoting research since its creation in 1968, and we are grateful to its scientists for their achievements in the advancement of research for new treatments and cures.

I ask my colleagues to join me in commending those who work tirelessly to fight blindness in America.

INTRODUCING THE CONSUMER ASSURANCE OF RADIOLOGIC EXCELLENCE BILL

HON. CHARLES W. "CHIP" PICKERING

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. PICKERING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Consumer Assurance of Radiologic Excellence Bill.

I ask for your support in moving this legislation forward. The CARE bill is an important piece of patient-care legislation. It will improve the quality of radiologic procedures performed throughout the United States as well as assist in reducing the cost incurred by the Federal government for these procedures.

The CARE bill in the 108th Congress had 111 bi-partisan House cosponsors and no known opposition. Passage of this bill will finally provide American patients with national standards to ensure that their radiologic procedures are performed by personnel who are trained, qualified and competent.

I am proud to sponsor this legislation because the safety and quality of radiologic procedures is an issue that affects all of us. Every year, more than 300 million x-rays, CT scans, MRIs and other medical imaging exams are performed in the United States, and seven out of 10 people undergo some type of radiologic procedure. So much depends upon the quality and accuracy of those examinations. After all, if an x-ray is poor, there is a chance that injuries could go undetected or diseases could go undiagnosed.

Most of us take it for granted that the person performing our radiologic procedures is a competent professional. But the fact is, poorly trained individuals examine and treat thousands of patients in this country every day.

The CARE bill will help correct that problem. You see, one of the best ways to assure quality radiologic procedures is to require a basic level of education and skill for the people responsible for performing these procedures.

The CARE bill would provide this level of assurance by amending a previous law, known as the Consumer-Patient Radiation Health and Safety Act of 1981. Twenty-two years ago, this bill established minimum standards for the education, certification and licensure of radiologic technologists. However, when the bill was enacted, compliance by the states was made voluntary rather than mandatory. As a result, radiographers in 13 states and the District of Columbia are unregulated. Even in states that license radiologic technologists, laws vary so widely that there is no guarantee that personnel are adequately educated to use the equipment with which they have been entrusted.

Under the CARE bill, personnel performing radiologic procedures in every state would be required to meet minimum educational and credentialing standards. Each state would then be responsible for regulating radiologic technologists according to those standards.

The current lack of a national standard for operators of medical imaging and radiation therapy equipment poses a hazard to American patients and jeopardizes quality health care. Accurate diagnosis can be provided only

when personnel are properly educated in anatomy, technique, equipment operation and radiation safety.

In states where no regulation exists, anyone is permitted to perform medical imaging and radiation therapy procedures, sometimes after just a few weeks of on-the-job training. But performing a CT scan or taking an x-ray involves much more than just pushing a button. The person responsible for performing the exam uses highly technical equipment that emits radiation.

The CARE bill will help ensure that quality radiation therapy treatments are delivered and that quality diagnostic information is presented for interpretation, which will lead to accurate diagnosis, treatment and cure. Poor quality exams can lead to additional testing, delays in treatment, and unnecessary anxiety for the patient. In the end, the public's health is at stake. An underexposed chest x-ray cannot reveal pneumonia, and an inaccurate radiation therapy treatment cannot stop the spread of cancer.

This legislation will also reduce health care costs by lowering the number of medical imaging examinations that must be repeated due to improper positioning or poor technique. Repeated imaging examinations cost the U.S. health care system millions of dollars annually in needless medical bills.

Millions of Americans every year depend upon medical imaging exams to diagnose disease and detect injury, and thousands more rely on radiation therapy to treat and cure their cancers. But remember, any radiologic procedure is only as effective as the person performing it. No matter how expensive or sophisticated the equipment, an imaging exam will not reveal a broken bone or a diseased organ if the person who is using that equipment does not know the basics of radiographic positioning, exposure and technique.

By regulating the personnel responsible for performing those procedures, the CARE bill will mean improved care for patients—higher quality images, improved accuracy, and less exposure to radiation.

I urge all my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support this legislation and enact it in a timely manner so American patients will receive the best care possible, provided by the best caregivers possible.

IN MEMORY OF LOWELL C. "BUTCH" SPIRES, JR.

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 17, 2005

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Monday, March 14, 2005, a great Statesman, friend and father passed away quietly. Known as "Butch" to those who loved him, was Lowell Colquit Spires, Jr. of Cayce. Outside of his many accomplishments, one of the great assets he had was his family and friends. He lived his life with honor, dignity and character. Opinionated and forthright in his speech, Butch's love for his community and fellow man spoke louder than anything else. He worked for the betterment of his commu-

nity and the impact it would accomplish for future generations. Butch set a mark in which his friends and family will always be honored for and grateful. Though his life was too short for those of us whom are left, his strength and love will always be a constant in our lives. The list of accomplishments in no way reveal the impact he has had on many people. He used to say, "The utmost a man can do is to give without hesitation. The character of our life is defined by how we love and live, not by what we personally obtain."

Born in Columbia on May 12, 1941, Butch was a son of the late Lowell C. and Margaret Estelle Love Spires, Sr. A lifelong resident, he was a member of Kitti Wake Baptist Church. Married to Gail Julian Spires since August 26, 1960, Butch was employed as president with WestBank Consultants, LLC, and was Special Projects Coordinator for the Town of Lexington. He was tireless in his accomplishments over the years. He served on the Lexington County Council from 1977–1995, as chairman in 1979, 1991 and 1993. He was one of Lexington County's representatives to CMCOG 1977–1983, 1993–present. Butch was vice-chairman of Central Midlands Council of Governments in 1978–79 and 1993–94, and chairman in 1979–80 and 1994–95. He served ten terms on the CMCOG Executive Committee, which included the Transportation Planning Subcommittee. This committee facilitated formation of the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority from 1999–2002, of which he was chairman from 2002–present. On this committee, Butch spearheaded funding and construction in the Central Midlands Region of 27 years of highway improvements in seven years through SCDOT's Bonding Program.

Butch was instrumental in securing funding to ensure continued development of Riverbanks Zoo, the economic development of the Midlands and Lexington County for over thirty years, and the development of the Columbia Convention Center. He originated CMCOG Wetlands Mitigation Bank, currently under development.

A charter member of Central Carolina Economic Development Alliance, Butch was also past president of the South Carolina Association of Regional Councils, past chairman of Lexington County Recreation of Aging Commission, and past president of the S.C. Association of Counties. He was currently a board member of the River Alliance since 1994, of which he originated the concept of 3-Rivers Greenway, member of West Metro and Greater Columbia Chambers of Commerce, served on the boards of Lexington Medical Center and the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

His honors include: Recipient of Order of Palmetto, first recipient of the CMCOG Regional Leadership Award in 2005, Transportation Association of SC Outstanding Achievement Award in 2003 for his support and advocacy of public transportation, named SC Ambassador for Economic Development by Governor Carroll Campbell in 1994, President's Cup for Distinguished Service in 1986, Woodrow Wilson Award in 1986, and recipient of the District Lay Award for SC Recreation and Parks Society in 1980.

Surviving, besides his wife are, daughter and son-in-law, Mindy Spires-Miller and Chuck Miller of Mt. Pleasant; sons and daughters-in-