

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SCHOOL CHOICE

HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to submit into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD two articles highlighting the positive impact of giving parents the ability to choose their children's school.

[From the New York Times, Sept. 18, 1997]

SCHOOL VOUCHER STUDY FINDS SATISFACTION  
(By Tamar Lewin)

In the first independent evaluation of Cleveland's groundbreaking school voucher program, a Harvard University study has found that the program was very popular with parents and raised the scores of those students tested at the end of the first year. "We found that parents who have a choice of school are much happier, and these private schools seem to be able to create an educational environment that parents see as safer, more focused on academics and giving more individual attention to the child" said Paul E. Peterson, director of the Education Policy and Governance at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government, which issued the report. "This happens despite the fact that these are very low-income students."

The Cleveland experiment has been closely watched as school vouchers emerge as a potent political issue across the country.

The report found that two-thirds of the parents whose children received vouchers to attend a private or parochial school were "very satisfied" with the academic quality of the school, compared to fewer than 30 percent of the parents of students who applied for vouchers but remained in public schools.

In addition, the parents using vouchers were also more than twice as likely to be happy with the school's discipline, class size, condition and teaching of moral values than those remaining in public school.

During the last school year, the Ohio Department of Education gave 1,996 Cleveland students from low-income families vouchers covering up to 90 percent of private or parochial school tuition, to a maximum of \$2,250. The amount is slightly more than a third of what the public school system spends annually per pupil.

Most students used the vouchers at Catholic schools. But about a quarter of those who received vouchers—mostly those who could not find another suitable placement—attended two new independent schools set up by advocates of the voucher program, known as Hope schools.

The study found that those students, tested at the beginning and end of the school year, made significant academic strides, gaining 15 percentage points in math and 5 percentage points on reading tests, relative to the national norms. However, language scores declined 5 percentage points overall, and 19 points among first graders.

The Cleveland schools have been troubled for years; in 1955, the system was put under state control when it ran out of money halfway through the year. Rick Ellis, a spokesman for the Cleveland schools, said that because the school system was now operated by the state, and the state also runs the voucher program, the Cleveland schools had taken no position on the program, which has been expanded to cover 3,000 students this year.

But Cleveland's voucher program—like the nation's only other large scale voucher program, in Milwaukee—remains under the cloud of a continuing court challenge. In May, an Ohio appeals court ruled that because the vouchers could be used at religious schools, the program was an unconstitutional mingling of church and state. The State Supreme Court, however, ruled that the program could continue this year, pending its review. With the Milwaukee voucher program pending in State Supreme Court, it is likely that one or both of the cases will ultimately wend their way to the United States Supreme Court.

Despite the legal uncertainties, vouchers remain a powerful political issue across the country:

In New Jersey in April, the Education Commission barred Lincoln Park, a suburban school board, from using tax money for vouchers.

In Vermont last year, the education office took away education funds of the Chittenden Town School District when it tried to include parochial schools in a voucher program for high schools.

In New York City and several other cities, small programs, privately financed by philanthropists, provide scholarships allowing some public school students to attend parochial schools.

In Washington, House and Senate Republicans have proposed a Cleveland-style program for the District of Columbia schools.

The evaluation of the Cleveland program is based on a survey of 2,020 parents who applied for vouchers, including 1,014 parents of voucher recipients, and 1,006 parents who applied but did not use the vouchers.

Those who applied, but ultimately remained in public school, cited transportation financial consideration and admission to a desired public school or failure to be admitted to the desired private school.

The average income of families using vouchers was lower than those whose children remained in public schools, but the two groups did not differ significantly with respect to ethnicity, family size, religion, or mother's education or employment. But those staying in public schools were more likely to be in special education classes or classes for the gifted.

The vast majority of participants, 85 percent, said their main reason for applying to the voucher program was to improve education for their children. Other commonly cited reasons were greater safety, location, religion and friends.

"I like to emphasize that parents said what was really important to them was academic quality of the school," said Professor Peterson, whose co-authors were Jay P. Greene of the University of Texas and Wil-

liam G. Howell of Stanford University. "A lot of people say low-income families don't care about quality, that they choose schools based on other factors, but that's not what the parents say."

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 18, 1997]

## CLEVELAND SHATTERS MYTHS ABOUT SCHOOL CHOICE

(By Jay P. Greene, William G. Howell, and Paul E. Peterson)

As delays in repairs keep the doors to Washington D.C.'s public schools closed, Congress is debating whether to approve the District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act, which could help restructure this dreary, patronage-ridden system and give at least a couple of thousand poor students a chance to attend the private school of their choice. True to his teacher-union allies, President Clinton remains adamantly opposed to giving poor children the same chance at a private education that his daughter, Chelsea, had.

In deciding whether to challenge the president, Congress would do well to consider what's been happening in Cleveland, site of the first state-funded program to give low-income students a choice of both religious and secular schools. Of more than 6,200 applicants, pupils entering grades K-3 last year, nearly 2,000 received scholarships to attend one of 55 schools. The scholarships cover up to 90% of a school's tuition, to a maximum of \$2,250, little more than a third of the per-pupil cost of Cleveland public schools.

This past summer we surveyed more than 2,000 parents, both scholarship recipients and those who applied but did not participate in the program. We found that parents of scholarship recipients new to choice schools were much more satisfied with every aspect of their school than parents of children still in public school. Sixty-three percent of choice parents report being "very satisfied" with the "academic quality" of their school, as compared with less than 30% of public-school parents. Nearly 60% were "very satisfied" with school safety, as compared with just over a quarter of those in public school. With respect to school discipline, 55% of new choice parents, but only 23% of public-school parents, were "very satisfied."

The differences in satisfaction rates were equally large when parents were asked about the school's individual attention to their child, parental involvement, class size and school facilities. The most extreme differences in satisfaction pertained to teaching moral values: 71% of the choice parents were "very satisfied," but only 25% of those in public schools were.

Our other findings provide powerful answers to many of the arguments raised by voucher opponents:

Parents, especially poor parents, are not competent to evaluate their child's educational experience. But test scores from two of the newly established choice schools justify parental enthusiasm. Choice students attending these schools, approximately 25% of the total coming from public schools, gained, on average, five percentile points in reading

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

and 15 points in mathematics during the course of the school year.

*Choice schools don't retain their students.* In fact, even though low-income, inner-city families are a highly mobile population, only 7% of all scholarship recipients reported that they did not attend the same school for the entire year. Among recipients new to choice schools the percentage was 10%. The comparable percentages for central-city public schools is twice as large.

*Private schools expel students who cannot keep up.* But only 0.4% of the parents of scholarship students new to school choice report this as a reason they changed schools this fall.

*Poor families pick their children's schools on the basis of sports, friends, religion or location, not academic quality.* Yet 85% of scholarship recipients from public schools listed "academic quality" as a "very important reason" for their application to the program. Second in importance was the "greater safety" to be found at a choice school, a reason given by 79% of the recipients. "Location" was ranked third. "Religion" was ranked fourth, said to be very important by 37%. Friends were said to be very important by less than 20%.

*Private schools engage in "creaming," admitting only the best, easiest-to-educate students.* But most applicants found schools willing to accept them, even though a lawsuit filed by the American Federation of Teachers prevented the program from operating until two weeks before school started. When those who were offered but did not accept a scholarship were asked why, inability to secure admission to their desired private school was only the fourth most frequently given reason, mentioned by just 21% of the parents remaining in public schools. Transportation problems, financial considerations and admissions to a desired public school were all mentioned more frequently. (Cleveland has magnet schools that may have opened their doors to some scholarship applicants.)

The data from Cleveland have some limitations, because the program was not set up as a randomized experiment. Yet the comparisons between scholarship recipients new to choice schools and those remaining in public schools are meaningful. That's because, with respect to most of their demographic characteristics—such as mother's education, mother's employment, and family size—the families of scholarship recipients did not differ from those remaining in public schools. In fact, the voucher recipients actually had lower incomes than the group to which they were compared.

Cleveland's success at school choice should not remain an exception to public schools' monopoly on education. If members of Congress care at all about the education of poor children living in the innercity, they should approve the voucher legislation for Washington now before them.

**PEOPLE HAVE TROUBLE SEEING DOCTORS BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE ENOUGH MONEY—NOT BECAUSE MEDICARE PAYS DOCTORS TOO LITTLE**

### HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the just-enacted Balanced Budget Act includes a provision that

allows doctors not to participate in Medicare for 2 years at a time, but instead to private contract with patients so that they can charge these patients much more than the Medicare fee schedule.

There is now a move underway to strike the 2-year requirement and let doctors do wallet biopsies—decide on a patient-by-patient basis whether they are going to ask patients to give up their Medicare rights and insurance and pay the extra in an individual private contract.

I can think of nothing that will encourage patients to move into HMO's faster, so that they are protected against the fear of this type of doctor extortion. The American Medical Association supports the proposal, but it is an idea that must have been deviously planted in their association by a mole from the HMO lobby—the American Association of Health Plans.

The proposal is pure greed wrapped in the flag of freedom.

Before the Congress is drowned in the rhetoric of this issue, we should note the facts. To the extent that Medicare beneficiaries have trouble seeing doctors, it is almost totally due to the fact that the cost is too much for the beneficiaries—not that Medicare doesn't pay the doctor enough to allow the doctor to see patients.

The latest data from the independent congressional advisory panel—the Physician Payment Assessment Commission—shows that only 4 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries reported having trouble getting health care in the last year. About 11 percent had a medical problem, but failed to see a physician, while 12 percent did not have a physician's office as a usual source of care. Roughly 10 percent of Medicare beneficiaries delayed care due to cost. Considering all four access measures, about 26 percent of Medicare beneficiaries cited experiencing at least one of these problems.

PhysPRC reports that from their surveys of those who failed to see a physician for their serious medical problem, 43 cited cost as the reason. About 8 percent of those who failed to see a physician could not get an appointment or find an available physician. For another 8 percent, transportation was the problem, 13 percent felt there was nothing a doctor could do, and 11 percent were afraid of finding out what was wrong.

In another words, Congress is preparing to let doctors charge patients infinitely higher fees because less than 1 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries had trouble finding a doctor—perhaps they lived in a rural area, etc. Yet over 5 percent of Medicare's nearly 40 million beneficiaries could not get to a doctor because they didn't have enough money—and Congress is silent.

Mr. Speaker, a humane Congress, a compassionate Congress, a logical, rational Congress would put five times as much effort into addressing the problem of doctors costing too much as it would in addressing what may be a 1-percent problem of a few doctors wanting to get paid more.

Where are our priorities, Mr. Speaker? A vote to let doctors, the richest 1-percent income group in our Nation, charge the sky's the limit, while ignoring the needs nearly 2 million seniors who find doctors already too expensive is a shameful vote.

### TRIBUTE TO HOLY FAMILY PARISH

### HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Holy Family Parish for its 100 years of providing spiritual guidance, counseling, and education to the south Bronx community.

On September 20, the parish celebrated its 100th anniversary in my south Bronx congressional district. On this joyful occasion, Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor officiated at a Thanksgiving Mass. Parishioners joined together in prayer to thank the Lord for the parish's 100 years of fruitful service.

Holy Family Parish has a long and inspiring history of perseverance and commitment to making a difference in the south Bronx. Through the years, the church has served a vibrant community of people from many ethnic backgrounds.

In the late 1890's, Rev. Joseph S. Mechler saw the need to serve an emerging community in the Bronx. In the fall of 1897, the cornerstone for the new church was laid, and by Christmas of that same year the congregation celebrated their first mass in the new building.

Archbishop Michael Corrigan dedicated the church in 1898. He lived in the basement of the parish and served his community until his final years.

Since 1903, eight pastors have faithfully served the parish. Among them was Father Urban Nageleisen, who served the church for 37 years, until his death in 1949. He was a friend and spiritual adviser to the growing German immigrant community of the time. Under his pastorate, the church also established a school for children with the help of the Sisters of St. Agnes.

During the difficult years of the Depression, the church continued serving the faithful and the congregation actually grew in numbers.

With the passing away of Father Nageleisen, Father John Mechler assumed the leadership of the church. During those years, the church and the convent that housed the Sisters of St. Agnes were both very deteriorated. Pastor Mechler proposed and raised the funding to build a new convent and a new church in the south Bronx. The new parish kept the original cornerstone.

Throughout its history, the Holy Family Parish has been responsive to the changing needs of its community. In 1981, the parish celebrated their first mass in Spanish in recognition of the growing Hispanic community, which had become an integral part of the church. In addition, the lower part of the church has been transformed into a meeting place for senior citizens, where hot lunches, recreational activities, and medical services are provided.

Today, Father James D. Flanagan leads the church. After 100 years, the church continues to be a catalyst of positive change in our community. Over 700 children are currently enrolled in the school, which educates students from kindergarten to eighth grade. In addition, hundreds of members of the community have grown in their faith.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Holy Family Parish for its 100 years of history at the service of the south Bronx community.

**AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL ROTUNDA TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE HIS ALL HOLINESS PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW**

SPEECH OF

**HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY**

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 16, 1997*

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement in support of House Concurrent Resolution 134 authorizing the use of the Capitol rotunda for a ceremony for His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and new Rome on October 21, 1997, from 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

The Ecumenical Patriarch occupies the foremost position among the National Autocephalous Orthodox Churches worldwide and has the responsibility to coordinate the affairs of the Russian, Eastern Europe, Middle, and Far Eastern churches. Worldwide, the Patriarch is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians of which 5 million reside in the United States.

Therefore, it is important that Members of Congress, as leaders of a nation that was built on religious freedom and tolerance, have an opportunity to receive and honor one of the world's preeminent religious leaders. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew not only promotes peace and religious understanding throughout the world, but he is also profoundly committed to preserving and protecting the environment. Today, as the 270th successor to Apostle Andrew, His All Holiness continues efforts on behalf of religious freedom and human rights.

In closing support, is an expression of appreciation to the members of the Hellenic Caucus for their advocacy of this resolution as well as H.R. 2248, the recommendation to award the Patriarch with a Congressional Gold Medal, of which I am a proud cosponsor. H.R. 134 as introduced by BILIRAKIS from Florida, is a measure which provide the occasion to receive such an individual of high character and moral standing as His All Holiness in a manner befitting their rank and title.

**A TRIBUTE TO THE JERRY L. PETTIS MEMORIAL VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER**

**HON. JERRY LEWIS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine work and outstanding public service of the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Loma Linda, CA. As the chairman of the House Appropriations Sub-

committee that provides funding for veterans programs, including veterans medical care, I am especially proud of this facility at this historic moment. On Thursday, September 25, this fine facility will celebrate 20 years of service to veterans who live and work in southern California. My dear friend and predecessor in Congress, Shirley Pettis Roberson, will address those attending this very special ceremony at the medical center.

In June 1974, a large crowd gathered for the ground breaking to begin construction of this facility. The first patient was admitted in December 1977, realizing a dream and long-term goal of former Congressman Jerry Pettis. Jerry Pettis was a good man and a close personal friend. Today, his legacy lives on through the commitment and fine work of the men and women who strive to serve our veterans with great care and respect. Jerry Pettis would certainly be proud of this fine institution and the many worthy people it serves.

The Pettis VA Medical Center has 125 acute care beds and 106 nursing home beds. With a budget of approximately \$109 million, over 600 volunteers, and over 1,200 employees, the facility last year alone, had over 6,500 admissions and over 230,000 outpatient visits. Working closely with Loma Linda University in many areas of clinical research and study, the medical center continues to conduct critical work in a variety of scientific disciplines.

In addition, the Pettis VA Medical Center has vigorously explored ways of providing the best possible service to the more than 290,000 veterans in Riverside County and San Bernardino County. The recently opened Victorville outpatient clinic, for example, has greatly improved access to primary care for thousands of veterans in California's high desert region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and our colleagues in paying special tribute to the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial VA Medical Center on its 20th anniversary. All of us owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our veterans, and we also owe a special thanks to the memory of our good friend and former colleague, for whom this facility is named. To both Jerry Pettis, and our veterans, Congress thanks you—and salutes you—on this historic day.

**IN HONOR OF KEITH AND ANNE MEDEIROS**

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commend Keith and Anne Medeiros for their distinguished careers of service to the community of Fremont, California. For 42 years, Keith and Anne lived in the Fremont area. In that time, they consistently worked to make our community a better place. Both have been dedicated to the field of education as elementary school teachers. Keith Medeiros also served as school principal, and as a member of the Alameda County Board of Education. Anne Medeiros taught English as a second language.

Their service to the community has been diverse. Keith Medeiros worked as an Indian Guide Dad, a Pathfinder Toastmaster, a Chamber of Commerce activist, a Fremont Rotarian, an on and off stage actor and toastmaster, and a Washington Township Men's Club member. Anne Medeiros served the community as a representative for Congressman Don Edwards, and as a board member for the Serra Center and the Committee to Restore the Mission. They shared their talents as members of the Fremont Gourmet Club, the Fremont Dance Club, and the Fremont Kite Flyers. They have been world-wide travelers, goodwill ambassadors, and advocates for historic Mission San José.

Keith and Anne Medeiros set a new standard as innkeepers for those whose travels took them to the Bay Area. Their hospitality was a welcome respite for travelers.

On September 22, 1997 the friends and colleagues of Keith and Anne Medeiros will honor their many years of community service. I join my neighbors as they extend a thank you to Keith and Anne for all they have done for Fremont.

**TRIBUTE TO ST. RAYMOND NONNATUS PARISH**

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to pay tribute to the Parish of St. Raymond Nonnatus, which yesterday celebrated 100 years of serving the community in my South Bronx congressional district.

The parish was named after a 13th century Spanish mercedarian and cardinal. It is located at 1759 Castle Hill Avenue, in the Bronx.

A mass of Thanksgiving offered by Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor opened the ceremonies of the parish's 100th anniversary. The church belongs to the family of parishes that were established in the late 1890's in New York City; among them is Holy Family Parish, which this year also celebrates its 100th anniversary.

The origins of St. Raymond Nonnatus Parish date back to 1843. A small church was erected under the leadership of Bishop John Hughes. In the 1890's Father Edward McKenna saw the church in poor condition and decided to erect a new building. The church was built in 1897 in a beautiful Byzantine style, with wonderful stained-glass windows.

Since its beginnings, the church has served a multiethnic community. In the early 1900's Catholics from all over Europe were members of the congregation. More recently, African-Americans and members of the Hispanic and Asian communities have joined the parish.

In 1908, under the pastorate of Father McKenna, a school was established to educate the children of the community. In the 1950's, Father Thaddeus Tierney oversaw the construction of a new school to accommodate the growing number of students. Even today, it remains one of the best equipped elementary schools in the Nation.

In addition, two other schools were established, the Boy's High School in 1958, and St. Raymond's Academy for Girls in 1960. A convent, a rectory and a cemetery are also integral parts of the parish.

Since the 1970's a social ministry was expanded to better serve the needs of the community. Monsignor Henry J. Vier added a Spanish mass to the Sunday schedule. He also established the Bronx Association for Special Education, the Archdiocesan Drug Addiction Program and the East Bronx Hunger Program.

Through the years, the church has been renovated several times. It now houses a magnificent marble altar, a great canopy, and an organ.

Today Father Charles Kavanagh leads the church. He is the 16th pastor of St. Raymond Nonnatus Parish. The parish now provides the community with various social services, including the Family Outreach and Youth Program, St. Raymond's Head Start, an expanded East Bronx Hunger Program, the After School Program, and the senior center.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Parish of St. Raymond Nonnatus for its glorious history and service to our South Bronx community.

#### WHAT IS JUST ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

#### HON. NEWT GINGRICH

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. GINGRICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert into the RECORD and encourage Members to read the following editorial by Henry Payne which appeared in the Wall Street Journal on Tuesday, September 16, 1997.

#### 'ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE' KILLS JOBS FOR THE POOR

(By Henry Payne)

Last Wednesday the Environmental Protection Agency delayed its approval of a proposed plastics plant in the predominantly black southern Louisiana town of Convent. It was the EPA's first ruling based on the idea of "environmental injustice" or "environmental racism"—the claim that polluting industries locate in minority areas because their residents are politically powerless to stop them. "It is essential that minority and low-income communities not be disproportionately subjected to environmental hazards," EPA Administrator Carol Browner wrote in her decision obstructing Shintech Inc.'s plans for a \$700 million manufacturing facility.

But if Ms. Browner had bothered asking the residents of Convent what they think, it would have been clear that the injustice is being perpetrated not by industry but by environmental elitists and their political allies, who falsely claim to represent local citizens while promoting their own ideological agenda. "None of these people are speaking for our community," says Carol Gaudin, a black resident of Convent and the organizer of a local pro-Shintech group, the St. James Citizen Coalition. "These environmental groups never came here and asked me if I wanted the plant. They can't just come in here and take it from us."

Gladys Maddie, a black mother who lives within a mile of the plant's proposed location, agrees. "We have witnessed groups such as Greenpeace descend on [Convent] like a plague of locusts," she wrote to the local newspaper. "We find the exploitative use of the color of our skin and our socio-economic condition sickening and insulting."

A recent poll by the local NAACP chapter found that 73% of the people in the black communities near the proposed plant favor it. But the Clinton administration is listening instead to the radical environmental group Greenpeace, which has waged a long war against the plastics industry. Greenpeace has offered its political and organizational muscle to the small group of mostly middle-class Convent residents who oppose the plant.

Louisiana's Department of Environmental Quality—charged by the EPA to regulate state industry—found in May that Shintech's plans satisfied the state's demanding emissions standards. But Greenpeace and its allies, determined to stop the plant, invoked President Clinton's 1994 executive order on environmental injustice, which compels federal agencies to consider whether minorities bear an unfair burden in the location of industrial facilities.

In Convent, the charge of environmental racism is laughable. Louisiana has actually practiced economic affirmative action by declaring the area a state enterprise zone. The state encouraged Shintech to locate in Convent, offering it tax breaks in return for hiring 35% of its work force from the surrounding population. Shintech operates a similar plant in Freeport, Texas, a prosperous, mostly white Gulf Coast city south of Houston. When Convent residents, including Ms. Maddie and Ms. Gaudin, visited Freeport earlier this year, they saw a standard of living they'd like to bring home.

Ms. Maddie's brother Roosevelt Teroud does backbreaking seasonal labor in Convent's sugarcane fields for \$6 an hour. To him, Shintech's more stable \$12- to \$15-an-hour jobs look like an opportunity, not an injustice. And the cultivation of sugarcane entails environmental hazards of its own: fields sprayed with insecticides and the resulting runoff that pollutes local water. Convent residents understand that industrial development entails environmental trade-offs, but they also think industry is their key to a better future. "The big plants up the river came in and gave those communities opportunities," says Nanette Jolivet, a lawyer representing Convent resident, "My clients want the same opportunity."

Forty-five miles away, the taxpayer-subsidized Tulane University Environmental Law Clinic represents plant opponents before the EPA. I asked Tulane lawyer Lisa Lavie what the citizens of Convent can do about economic development if her side wins. Her reply: "That area has some beautiful old plantations. They could build a cultural tourism industry."

"That's horrible!" Carol Gaudin gasps. "My ancestors were slaves on those plantations. These white opponents don't understand—we don't want to remember our past. We want a future."

Aligned against media-savvy, full-time environmentalists and their Washington allies, Convent residents know they have an uphill battle. They're not getting much help from the national black leadership. Lobbied by Greenpeace, both the Rev. Jesse Jackson and the Rev. Joseph Lowry of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference spoke out against the plant this summer.

"They blatantly ignored the opinions of all the local elected African-American officials," says an outraged Ms. Jolivet, noting that neither Mr. Jackson nor Mr. Lowry contacted Convent's local councilmen, all of whom voted in favor of the plant.

The EPA didn't give environmentalists everything they wanted. They had hoped for a firm definition of environmental racism that would set a plant-killing precedent for other such cases. The EPA only called for more study; it did not kill the Shintech plant outright. But the opponents' strategy seems to follow a common pattern: Throw up enough bureaucratic roadblocks and Shintech will eventually give up.

Sadly, this strategy works. In Claiborne Parish, La., where the federal Atomic Energy Board held up construction of a \$850 million nuclear fuel enrichment facility this May on grounds of environmental injustice, one investor—Northern States Power—has announced that it will pull out after a seven-year (and counting) regulatory process. "At some point these companies just throw up their hands in frustration," sighs Mary Boyd, a spokeswoman for the Claiborne facility.

For the residents of Convent, eager for the 165 jobs and \$5.6 million in school revenue that the Shintech plant will bring, the EPA's obstruction is unconscionable. "Why do these people want to take away our jobs?" asks Gladys Maddie. "If we run Shintech away, we're finished."

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote No. 415, I was unavoidably detained on official business. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

#### TRIBUTE TO THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH JERSEY HERALD AND NEWS

#### HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the momentous occasion of the 125th anniversary of New Jersey's North Jersey Herald and News.

The Herald and News had its beginning in 1872. Debuting as a weekly newspaper, the Herald and News has a storied and remarkable history which has impacted the people of northern New Jersey. For more than 125 years, the Herald and News has stood as a symbol of the character of its loyal readers. The commitment and dedication shown by its founders and its ability to adapt to a changing world have made the newspaper an important part of Passaic County's history.

The Herald and News has always maintained a respected, balanced, and detailed coverage of the people and events which have been brought to life on the pages each day. The Herald and News is more than just a

newspaper—it is an institution in the everyday life of northern New Jersey. It has a heritage unique in the annals of American journalism and American history. The men and women who make the newspaper today are proud of its glorious traditions and continue to build on this impressive legacy.

Mr. Speaker, I would like for you to join me, our colleagues, the men and women of the Herald and News, and the people of northern New Jersey in recognizing the North Jersey Herald and News' 125th anniversary. As we celebrate the 125 years of its service to the community, it is only proper that we extend our heartfelt congratulations on a remarkable tradition and best wishes for continued success and prosperity well into the new century.

**ALABAMA TEACHER IN BOSNIA  
AND HERZEGOVINA HELPS DE-  
VELOP SUPPORT FOR DEMOC-  
RACY AND FREE ELECTIONS**

**HON. TERRY EVERETT**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. EVERETT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to recognize Joan Byington Stough of my congressional district, who participated in CIVITAS@Bosnia and Herzegovina, an intensive program from August 1–17, 1997, designed to train teachers from throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina with materials and methods developed to educate for democracy. Joan Byington Stough is a counselor-teacher at Dalraida Elementary School in the Montgomery County School System, Montgomery, AL.

Ms. Stough was part of a team of 20 American educators who were assigned to 16 locations throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina, including the Republika of Srpska. The Americans teamed with 18 teachers from the Council of Europe in nine of these sites. This education for program reached 550 teachers from both entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The summer training program was developed by the Center for Civic Education, which supplied me with this information, as part of a major civic education initiative in Bosnia and Herzegovina supported by the U.S. Information Agency and the United States Department of Education. It built on a program which began in 1996. I am told that the U.S. Information Service in Sarajevo provided valuable assistance to the program. The goals of the program are to provide teachers with the tools necessary to help prepare students and their communities for competent and responsible citizenship, including participation in elections and other opportunities to take part in the political life of their communities. Achieving this goal will contribute to the reconstitution of a sense of community, cooperation, tolerance and support for democracy and human rights in this war torn area.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to commend Joan Byington Stough for her dedication and commitment during the summer training program. Her work is helping to achieve the overall objective of building democracy in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**TRIBUTE TO HUNTS POINT MULTI-  
SERVICE CENTER, INC.**

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the Hunts Point Multi-Service Center, Inc., for 30 years of service to the South Bronx community. The anniversary was celebrated on September 14 at 630 Jackson Avenue, in my South Bronx congressional district.

Ramon S. Velez, the center's founder and president, understood the need to establish a center that could provide South Bronx residents with a wide variety of services right in the community. The Center started as a Federal demonstration project, established with the collaboration of Federal, State, and local governments.

Throughout its 30 years of service, the center has been a model of excellence in providing our community with quality health care, counseling, substance abuse services, education, training, child care, and housing services.

With the collaboration of a qualified staff, the center expanded its network to include additional services in conjunction with other local organizations and medical centers. Among these are: the South Bronx Mental Health Council, the Lincoln Medical and Mental Health Center, United Bronx Parents, the Bronx Perinatal Consortium, the New York State Division of Parole, the Osborne Association, Argus Community, and the Bronx-Lebanon Hospital Center.

Highlights of the 30th anniversary celebration were the inauguration of a new health center and dedications for a new Head Start Center and the South Bronx School of Technology. It also featured a community parade, an ethnic festival, and performances by many artists, including Tito Puente.

The achievements of the Hunts Point Multi-Service Center are measured by the people it has served. Thousands of residents have been employed and benefited from the center's education and training programs. And hundreds of thousands of people, from children to senior citizens, have received quality health care.

Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to honor the family and friends of the Hunts Point Multi-Service Center, Inc. for their 30 years of success and dedication serving the South Bronx community.

**IN 1995, MEDICARE PAID 393 DOCTORS MORE THAN \$1 MILLION FOR SERVICES; 3,152 DOCTORS RECEIVED BETWEEN \$500,000 AND \$1,000,000. NOW A GREEDY FEW WANT MORE**

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the Medicare agency tells me that in 1995, Medicare paid

393 doctors more than \$1 million for services; 3,152 doctors received between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000. Now a Greedy Few want more.

Despite the ability of doctors to make a fortune from Medicare by providing lots of services to beneficiaries, a few doctors are pushing an amendment by Senator KYL to let doctors privately contract with Medicare benefits.

Strip away the rhetoric, and a private contract is a contract between a doctor who holds his life in your hands in which he demands that you give up your Medicare benefits and that you promise not to file a claim with Medicare. Instead, you agree to let him charge you anything he wants—because you are desperate for your health. We like to think of contracts between equals, negotiated fairly. There is no equality, there is no fairness in these contracts.

Want an example of a private contract? Look at today's Washington Post, page B-3, where a doctor in Manassas, VA is being investigated for charging a Medicare-eligible patient \$12,000 for the injection of a massive dose of aloe vera into the stomach in order to combat lung cancer. The investigation is due to the fact the man died in the doctor's office after the injection. Medicare does not cover quackery. It does not pay \$12,000 for an injection. But this man and this doctor had a private contract. There will be a lot more of this murderous nonsense if the Kyl amendment succeeds.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 23, 1997]

**VA. DOCTOR'S TREATMENT OF MAN WHO DIED  
IS SCRUTINIZED**

(By Leef Smith)

A Texas man who had lung cancer died in the spring in the office of a Manassas physician to whom he had gone for a costly intravenous treatment that is not officially sanctioned but that he hoped would save his life, according to Virginia State Police.

The man, Clarence Holland Lander, 83, became "violently ill" shortly after the \$12,000 treatment was administered, and he died May 17, according to records in Prince William County Circuit Court.

The physician, Donald L. MacNay, an orthopedic surgeon, is under investigation in connection with Lander's death and with the treatment allegedly employed—intravenous administration of "a concentrated form of aloe vera and other substances," police said. Aloe vera, a cactus-like member of the lily family, is known to have some healing properties.

Police said that their investigation is continuing and that MacNay has not been charged with any offense. MacNay, who investigators said still is licensed to practice medicine, did not return phone calls to his Manassas office yesterday.

An assistant to MacNay, Ronald Ragan Sheetz, 41, of Manassas, was arrested Thursday and charged with nursing without a license. According to an affidavit that accompanied the request for the arrest warrant, MacNay ordered Sheetz to give Lander the aloe vera injection.

"This procedure was carried out by the subject believed to be Ronald Sheetz who has no medical license of file, under Dr. MacNay's direction and presence," the warrant states. State Police spokeswoman Lucy Caldwell said MacNay also is under investigation in connection with Sheetz's action.

"We're looking into questionable medical practices, drug transactions and suspicious

cancer treatments of this doctor's office," Caldwell said. "At this time we're trying to determine how wide-reaching the practice here may be. It's still too early to say."

A spokeswoman for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration said that the intravenous aloe vera treatment has not been approved by the agency and that officials with the National Cancer Institute said they are not studying aloe in connection with cancer treatment.

At the same time, the healing properties of aloe are being studied by researchers exploring alternative medicines to treat diseases, and papers and advertisements about oral aloe-based concentrates are found easily on the Internet. Experts say that as many as 50 percent of the cancer patients in the United States try some kind of therapy that is not officially sanctioned.

Such treatments include special diets, vitamins, mental imagery, wearing magnets, coffee enemas and consuming cartilage and oil from sharks.

Lander's son, James Lander, said that his father was in excellent health before the terminal cancer was diagnosed and that he jumped at the chance to beat the disease. He said his father learned about the aloe treatment from reading an article and found MacNay through word-of-mouth referrals.

"The treatment gave him hope," James Lander said. "He completely brightened up. You could just see it. I'm sure he thought it would cure him or he wouldn't have gone to Virginia" from his home in Waco, Tex.

In a search warrant affidavit filed Friday in Circuit Court, investigators said they were seeking "patient files and other records related to appointments and [the] treatment of other patients who have received this treatment and have both lived and died."

An affidavit was filed yesterday in Fairfax County Circuit Court to obtain a search warrant for an office in Annandale that police said MacNay opened in July.

Sheetz was released from jail on personal recognizance. If convicted of the felony charge, he could be sentenced to up to five years in prison.

#### THE RESPONSIBLE BORROWER PROTECTION BANKRUPTCY ACT

**HON. RICK BOUCHER**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. BOUCHER. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join with my friend, BILL MCCOLLUM, in introducing the Responsible Borrower Protection Bankruptcy Act. This legislation is intended to ensure that our personal bankruptcy laws operate fairly, efficiently, and free of abuse.

Today's consumer bankruptcy system is fundamentally flawed. The Bankruptcy Code makes virtually no attempt to calibrate the level of bankruptcy protection to the level of each debtor's need. Rather, it allows a debtor to discharge debts even if the debtor can repay those debts. Currently, about 70 percent of bankruptcy filers use chapter 7, which has no provision for debt repayment even if the filer can repay. Only 30 percent use chapter 13, which sets up repayment plans. At present, individuals with significant income and the ability to repay some of their debts can obtain the same full discharge of debts as individuals with little or no income and assets.

Our legislation addresses this problem by requiring that a debtor demonstrate that he or she actually needs bankruptcy relief and, if so, provides only the amount of relief that is needed. This needs-based system would create a simple formula, based on a debtor's income and obligations, to determine exactly how much relief the debtor needs. Individuals with no means to repay their debts could file for bankruptcy under chapter 7, thereby obtaining complete debt relief and a fresh start. Individuals who can repay a portion of their debts would file under chapter 13 and begin a repayment plan based on what they can afford. Recognizing that an individual's circumstances can change, the legislation also requires a periodic review of a debtor's financial situation so the repayment can be adjusted if necessary.

The legislation also imposes a number of procedural reforms to improve the bankruptcy process. It streamlines bankruptcy proceedings so that they are more efficient for all parties involved. It requires that debtors receive information about alternatives to bankruptcy, including credit counseling. Educating consumers about their options should help to spare many consumers from the bankruptcy process, since many creditors are willing to create alternative repayment programs with people in financial distress.

With this change in the Bankruptcy Code, the bankruptcy system would protect consumers in financial difficulty without unfairly imposing inappropriate additional costs and burdens on consumers who continue to pay their debts. The Responsible Borrower Protection Bankruptcy Act recognizes that individuals who file for bankruptcy should receive the amount of debt relief they truly need—no more and no less.

All consumers should benefit from this legislation—every consumer pays higher prices for goods and services and higher interest rates as a result of bankruptcy losses. Enactment of the Responsible Borrower Protection Bankruptcy Act will reduce the level of those bankruptcy losses, thereby reducing the cost of credit for all consumers.

Also benefiting from this reform will be borrowers who pose some risk for lenders. The ease of filing for chapter 7 relief today discourages the making of loans to these creditworthy but somewhat marginal borrowers. Honest, well-intentioned low-income consumers will find greater opportunities to obtain credit when our legislation is enacted.

I am pleased to be an original cosponsor of this legislation and will work closely with my colleague, Mr. MCCOLLUM, to ensure its passage.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE FOREST RECOVERY AND PROTECTION ACT OF 1997

**HON. ROBERT SMITH**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Forest Recovery and Protection Act of 1997 to address the grave forest

health problems that exist, not only in my home State of Oregon, but across the United States.

I am delighted to be joined by Representative CHARLIE STENHOLM, ranking Democrat on the Agriculture Committee, Representative LARRY COMBEST, who chairs the Subcommittee on Forests, Resource Conservation and Research, as well as Representatives BISHOP, CALLAHAN, EMERSON, and PETERSON (PA), who are original cosponsors of the bill. A companion to this bill will also be introduced in the Senate by Senator GORDON SMITH of Oregon.

That this bill enjoys bipartisan support in the House, and equally substantial support in the Senate, indicates both the significance of our growing forest health crisis and the commitment of Members in both Chambers of Congress and on both sides of the aisle to address the issue in a productive and cooperative way.

This bill is the result of six Agriculture Committee hearings on the health of America's forest, in which the committee listened to and learned from the administration, scientists, academics, lawmakers, State foresters, land managers, environmentalists, and the forest products industry.

It establishes a nationwide, scientific, organized, efficient, and timely strategy for addressing forest health concerns in all regions of the country. This legislation is desperately needed, because, as our hearing record attests:

The long-term health of America's forest is threatened by wildfire, disease, insect infestations, and the loss of habitat.

Each region of the country has significant and unique forest health problems requiring individualized and carefully tailored remedies.

A tremendous body of scientific knowledge exists that both documents declining forest conditions, and promotes strategies for land managers to restore and recover vulnerable forest resources.

Delayed or passive management of our forests will certainly result in long-term resource damage. The most effective way to reverse this grave trend is through active, scientific, timely management.

The Chief of the Forest Service has testified that 40 million acres of national forest are at imminent risk of being lost to catastrophic wildfire. Yet, we are investing just \$50 million per year in on-the-ground wildfire prevention, while spending as much as \$1 billion per year fighting wildfire.

This is backward. Unless we invest more in prevention, wildfires will continue to increase in frequency and intensity, destroying human life and property and degrading habitat, watershed values, and the quality of our air and water.

The Forest Recovery and Protection Act sets forth a strategy that will assist the Forest Service in rolling up its shirt sleeves and tackling chronic forest conditions in an organized and timely way and within the parameters of all existing environmental laws and forest plans.

This legislation creates a national, 5-year program to restore forest health by directing the Forest Service to systematically identify and prioritize forest recovery areas at greatest

risk of loss to wildfire, insect infestations and disease, and conduct recovery projects in these areas.

To assist the agency in identifying and ranking the areas at greatest risk, a new scientific panel is established in an advisory capacity. Because adequate monitoring of management activities is so important, this panel is also charged with providing recommendations on a monitoring plan for the national program.

Prior to implementation of the 5-year program, the bill directs the agency to implement advance forest recovery projects. These projects will proceed in areas where the risk of destruction to human life and property or of serious resource degradation is obvious and imminent and where extensive scientific assessments have already been completed, and treatments can be designed and implemented quickly.

The bill also provides a new source of funding to assist the Forest Service in implementing advance recovery projects and administering the national program. In order to maximize agency accountability for the use of this new funding, the bill requires that the fund's availability be tied to timely decision-making and reporting by the agency. This will create an incentive for the agency to act in a time-sensitive and responsible manner.

The bill sets a standard of accountability for the agency consistent with the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act. The Forest Service is required to report both to Congress and the American public on the results achieved by the projects conducted under this act. In addition, the USDA Inspector General and the General Accounting Office are required to conduct a comprehensive audit of the national program to aid Congress in its determination of whether to continue the program in the long term.

Finally, the bill requires more frequent and standardized inventories of forest lands through an existing Forest Service program called Forest Inventory and Analysis. This provision will assist private, Federal, and other public land managers in planning and management decisions through the availability of the best and more current scientific data.

I look forward to receiving thoughtful and constructive comment on this bill as it moves through the committee process. I am confident that, with a bipartisan effort in the Agriculture Committee and the cooperation of the administration, we will produce a finished plan of action for improving and protecting our country's forest resources both in the short term and for generations to come

TRIBUTE TO SOUTHWEST  
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

**HON. ROY BLUNT**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to recognize an institution in southwest Missouri for promoting and laying the foundation upon which character is built. The institution I speak of is Southwest Missouri State University [SMSU] where I had the privi-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

lege to earn my master's in history. The award is the "Templeton Foundation Honor Roll for Character Building Colleges." Some 135 institutions were selected out of 2,208 eligible universities and colleges. More impressive is that of the 6 percent of universities that were privileged to receive this award, only eight were public institutions and SMSU was the only public institution in Missouri to receive this award.

In 1995, SMSU began a statewide mission in public affairs that focuses on developing traits within students that help them to become responsible citizens. That is why it is no surprise that SMSU would meet the standards needed to be recognized as a character building institution. Those standards considered as determinants of the award are the extent to which students are inspired to develop and strengthen their moral reasoning skills, the encouragement of spiritual growth and moral values, community building experiences, a drug-free lifestyle and whether the institution conducts critical assessments of its character-building programs and activities.

SMSU begins to establish each of these values when students start their first year through forums where nationally known role models emphasize personal responsibility and character. Freshmen also attend a mandatory class that focuses on responsible citizenship in a learning community. This class teaches that drug and alcohol abuse will not be tolerated but also demonstrates alternatives that encourage physical, social, and spiritual well-being. Frequent roundtable discussions focus on incorporating principle values that help a learning institution like SMSU flourish. More than 20 religious organizations on campus are very active and play an influential role in student life. The city of Springfield has benefited from the community involvement of SMSU where just last year students, faculty, and staff contributed more than 69,500 hours of community service. SMSU students also are responsible for coordinating the nationwide "Into the Streets" program for the city of Springfield. SMSU surveys alumni and faculty to assess the civic involvement and also studies other universities to learn their assessment techniques.

While I know that students, faculty, and staff of SMSU will celebrate this award, the community of Springfield and every parent whose child is attending SMSU should as well. Employees can know that when they hire someone with a degree from SMSU they can trust them to be faithful employees of character and good citizenship. Parents can be confident that when they send their children to SMSU they will learn not only book knowledge but also the values needed to produce good character.

Finally may I add that we remember the words of Herbert Spencer when he said "Education has for its object the formation of character." Thank you SMSU for making that your object as well.

*September 23, 1997*

TRIBUTE TO "ORQUESTA ARAGÓN"

**HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following tribute for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It was presented on September 13, 1997, at a special event in my South Bronx congressional district.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of the most famous orchestras of Cuban music of all times—the "Orquesta Aragón," from Cuba. "Orquesta Aragón" will perform on September 13 at a special event at Hostos Community College in my South Bronx congressional district.

Thousands of people are expected to attend and enjoy the music of this world famous orchestra. At this event, Andy Montañez, one of Cuba's most talented composers and singers, will join the orchestra. The success of this event is a symbol of the close relationship that exists between the people of that Caribbean Island, the South Bronx community and beyond.

"Orquesta Aragón" was founded in 1939 by bass player Orestes Aragón. In 1945, violin player Rafael Lay became the director of the orchestra at the age of 19. During the 1940's and 1950's, it became the best orchestra of "son", "mambo", "danzón", and "cha-cha-chá" in Cuba.

As a publication in Cuba simply described it: "Charanga bands were divided into two groups; in one was Aragón and, in the other, were all the rest."

That was the time when all radio stations in Havana carried Aragón music. This fact, and the signing of a recording contract with RCA-Victor, assured the orchestra tremendous international success.

The orchestra went on tour and gained the hearts of fans in Europe, the Far East and the Americas. It has performed on famous stages worldwide, including the Tchaikovsky Conservatory in Moscow and the Lincoln Center's Avery Fisher Hall.

One of the compositions created by Richard Egües, "El Bodeguero", was soon recorded by Nat King Cole and other famous musicians.

With the passing away of Rafael Lay, the orchestra's baton was passed on to Richard Egües, and most recently to Lay's son, Rafael Lay, Jr.

Throughout its 58 years of playing great Afro-Cuban music, "Orquesta Aragón" has recorded over 700 tunes and recorded dozens of LP's and CD's. It has also received numerous honors, including the Egrem's Grand Prize for breaking record sales with its golden anniversary recording, "50 Años de Oro."

The orchestra continues to be acclaimed internationally. In 1992, it enjoyed great success at the Carnival in Barranquilla, Colombia.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the exceptional talent of the "Orquesta Aragón" and in wishing its members continued success.

HONORING THE HEROIC ACTS OF  
KIRK FISTICK

**HON. STENY H. HOYER**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the heroic acts of a young man from my district. Kirk Fistick set aside his own fears of disease and infection to save another life. What sets this courageous act apart is that it took place in Russia. By crossing both language and cultural barriers with this remarkable act, Kirk became an Ambassador for the United States. Kirk's heroic acts led the Boy Scouts of America to award him the Honor Medal, an honor only given to 36 people in 1993.

Kirk was one of 40 students selected by the National Freedom Support Act Scholarship to represent our country as a foreign exchange student in Russia. One day during his stay in Russia, he came across a man on the side of the road who had stopped breathing. Kirk risked his own life to perform CPR three times before the ambulance arrived and was able to keep him alive until he could receive medical care. Kirk reminds us all, Russian and American, that the Good Samaritan still exists today.

Kirk Fistick is the son of Robert and Patricia Fistick who reside in Charlotte Hall, MD. Kirk has an exceptional list of accomplishments. In addition to recently being awarded the Honor Medal, Kirk is an Eagle Scout and was awarded a National Certificate of Merit by the Boy Scouts of America for his help at the site of an automobile accident.

Kirk's life has not been all fun and games. He had to endure a 2-year bout with Lyme disease which he contracted during the summer of 1993. At times during these 2 years he was so critically ill he could not walk or sit up straight and required hospitalization or home care, but Kirk is a fighter. Throughout his illness, he managed to achieve honor roll status and played ice hockey as part of his physical therapy.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join with me in honoring this outstanding young man for his many accomplishments and congratulate him on being awarded the Honor Medal.

THE NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT  
OF 1997

**HON. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM**

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Chairman BLILEY and the Commerce Committee for passing out of committee H.R. 1270, The Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1997.

Fifteen years ago the Department of Energy, under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act, was given the responsibility of determining the best location for a centralized nuclear storage facility and for readying it to receive irradiated fuel by January 1998.

The rate payers, our constituents, have financed this operation at a cost of \$13 billion. We have built and tested shipping containers and found them to be reliable and safe. Our European counterparts regularly ship similar canisters both domestically and internationally. With the passage of H.R. 1270, we can consolidate our spent nuclear fuel in a centralized facility.

So why the holdup? The problem is not money or safety, but politics.

As we wait for passage of H.R. 1270, the price tag to our constituents grows. Continued delays could force nuclear powerplants to build additional storage space at the rate payers' expense. Furthermore, because Congress fails to use the funds accumulated in the nuclear waste fund, other nonrelated projects siphon money from this depleting account.

It is time that money collected for the nuclear waste fund be spent for its intended purpose and that the administration keeps their promise to the American people. Let's stop wasting our citizen's money and finish the job: Support H.R. 1270.

ON BILL REGARDING SALLIE MAE  
REFINANCING

**HON. DAVID E. SKAGGS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, on September 18, when I introduced H.R. 2511, a bill to correct an unfair practice occurring as a result of the privatization of Sallie Mae, the bill's effective date was in error. I am introducing the same legislation, but with an effective date of today to correct the problem.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

**HON. RON KIND**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, 3 weeks have now passed since the August congressional recess, and still no campaign finance reform. The frustration among Members is growing over the inability of this House to take action on this issue.

There is no issue that is demanding more attention this fall, yet we have not found the time to consider any bill in the Government Reform and Oversight Committee or on the floor of the House. On today's calendar we are considering 15 pieces of legislation, including a bill to study the feasibility of changing the U.S. quarter-dollar coin to commemorate all 50 states. While this idea may have some merit, it clearly is not as pressing an issue as campaign finance reform. The trend in this Congress, the last several months, has been to investigate rather than legislate. Today, unfortunately, we have decided to commemorate rather than legislate.

Mr. Speaker, I and my constituents are tired of hearing no as an answer. It is time to schedule campaign finance reform for a vote.

TRIBUTE TO THE CATHOLIC  
HOSPICE

**HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to applaud the efforts of the Catholic Hospice, a nonprofit organization located in my congressional district, and the commitment and efforts of all of their volunteers. The Catholic Hospice is an organization established in 1988 by the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami, SSI Mercy Health System, and St. Francis Medical Health Care Services, whose mission it is to serve the physical and emotional needs of terminally ill patients and their families of all faiths in Dade and Monroe Counties.

Among some of the projects Catholic Hospice offers are Camp Hope, a 3-day intensive therapy session that is offered to children who have lost a parent or very close caregiver within the last 12 months; bereavement support groups, which are counseling sessions offered to adults to assist them to deal with grief and loss; and a volunteer program, where volunteers offer their services free of charge to patients and families who need basic support through a very critical time.

In recognition of the dedication of their volunteers, the Catholic Hospice will be having its annual volunteer luncheon this September 27, where their most valuable volunteers will be recognized. It is volunteers such as Claire Salichs, Tish O'Neil, Lois Newmark, and Berta Friedman, among many others, who have selflessly given their time and energy to assist patients as well as their families during these difficult periods. It is these same individuals who have been indispensable in making the Catholic Hospice a success and whose efforts I commend.

I congratulate the Catholic Hospice for serving so many of south Florida's patients and families and I applaud the efforts of all its volunteers for their dedication to all of those who are sickly or bereaving the loss of a loved one. Death is an experience that is hard to bear for everyone and it is the support of the volunteers at Catholic Hospice that allow those who have lost a loved one to heal more rapidly and enjoy the memories of those who have passed away.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. XAVIER BECERRA**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on September 16, 1997, I was unavoidably detained during two rollcall votes: No. 398, on agreeing to the Goodling amendment and No. 399, on agreeing to the Hoekstra amendment. Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "yes" on No. 398 and "no" on No. 399.

GAO'S OUTSTANDING RESULTS  
ACT WORK

HON. RICHARD K. ARMEY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, the Government Performance Results Act, popularly known as the Results Act, holds the promise of achieving a smaller, smarter, commonsense Federal Government. It provides the tools we need to comprehensively evaluate Federal programs and agencies in order to determine what's working, what's wasted, what needs to be improved, and what needs to be rethought. It will help us ferret out fraud, waste, error, and redundancy in current programs.

For these reasons, effective implementation of the Results Act is a high priority for the Congress. Indeed, we have already devoted much attention to ensuring that the act achieves its full potential. We recently completed extensive congressional consultations on draft agency strategic plans through a coordinated effort that involved virtually all House committees and featured outstanding teamwork across jurisdictional and party lines. Our September 4 interim report, entitled "The Results Act: It Matters Now," provides an overall assessment of the agency draft plans based on our consultations.

Our evaluations and feedback on agency draft plans drew heavily on analyses done for us by the General Accounting Office. I want to take this opportunity to commend the GAO and its many dedicated employees for their superb work on this project.

At our request, GAO conducted comprehensive reviews of draft strategic plans for 28 departments and agencies. In order to meet the need to complete congressional consultations promptly, GAO reported to us within 30 days following receipt of each agency's draft plan. The reports were uniformly thorough and insightful. Their detailed analyses and constructive criticisms provided invaluable assistance to us, to our committee teams, and to the agencies. In addition to issuing written products, the GAO staff responsible for each report provided oral briefings to our committee teams.

GAO's ability to produce so much outstanding work in such a short time period is a tribute to the breadth of knowledge, expertise, and commitment of its outstanding staff. Each of the individuals involved in this project can rightly be proud of his or her accomplishment. This project reflects the highest standards of GAO's service to the Congress and to the American taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to insert in the RECORD letters of commendation that we sent to Jim Hinchman, the Acting Comptroller General, and to Chris Mihm, who coordinated the entire GAO project. I would also like to insert in the RECORD the names of all the other fine GAO employees who made major contributions to this project. A special commendation is in order for Henry Wray, who is a detailee to the Congress from GAO who is a tireless, professional optimist who has given of this time and talents on behalf of Government reforms in which he believes.

## EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

My hearty thanks to all those with GAO who have provided such a solid support for the Congressional effort to get to a smaller, smarter, more commonsense government using all the tools, laws, and resources available to us.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, September 22, 1997.

Mr. J. CHRISTOPHER MIHM,  
Acting Associate Director, General Government  
Division, U.S. General Accounting Office,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHRIS: On behalf of ourselves and many others in the Congress, we wish to commend you for your superb contributions to effective implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act.

For the past several years, you have spearheaded a number of excellent GAO efforts in support of the Results Act. They include the following products, among many others: *Executive Guide: Effectively Implementing the Government Performance and Results Act*, GAO/IGD-96-118 (June 1996); *Agencies' Strategic Plans Under GPRA: Key Questions to Facilitate Congressional Review*, GAO/IGD-10.1.16 (May 1997); and *The Government Performance and Results Act: 1997 Governmentwide Implementation Will Be Uneven*, GAO/IGD-97-109 (June 1997).

Most recently, you played a key role in producing the 28 reports on agency draft strategic plans that GAO provided to us, each of which was done within a 30-day deadline. The reports were uniformly thorough and insightful. Their detailed analyses and constructive criticisms of each plan provided invaluable assistance to us and to our Results Act consultation teams. You coordinated GAO's overall effort to produce these reports and personally reviewed and contributed to the substance of many of them. On September 4, we issued an Interim Report on implementation of the Act, entitled "The Results Act: It Matters Now," which provides an overall assessment of agency draft strategic plans and draws heavily on the GAO analyses.

In addition to these efforts, you have been a constant and invaluable source of informal assistance on Results Act issues to many members of Congress and Congressional staff in both the House and the Senate and on both sides of the aisle. You have demonstrated outstanding expertise on the Results Act and government management issues in general, remarkable energy and enthusiasm, and an unflinching spirit of cooperation. You should take great pride in all of these efforts. They reflect the highest standards of public service.

Once again, thank you for all of your outstanding support of Results Act implementation. As you know, we view effective implementation of the Act as a high priority. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that this vitally important law achieves its full promise.

Sincerely,

DICK ARMEY,  
House Majority Leader.

DAN BURTON,  
Chairman, House Government Reform and Oversight Committee.

JOHN KASICH,  
Chairman, House Budget Committee.

BOB LIVINGSTON,  
Chairman, House Appropriations Committee.

September 23, 1997

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,  
Washington, DC, September 22, 1997.

Mr. JAMES F. HINCHMAN,  
Acting Comptroller General of the United States,  
U.S. General Accounting Office, Wash-  
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. HINCHMAN: On September 4, we issued an Interim Report on implementation of the Government Performance and Results Act. The report, entitled "The Results Act: It Matters Now," provides an overall assessment of agency draft strategic plans based on Congressional consultations on those plans as mandated by the Act. The report draws heavily from the analyses of agency draft plans done for us by the General Accounting Office as part of our consultations. We wish to take this opportunity to commend the GAO and its many dedicated employees for this superb work.

By letter dated June 12, 1997, we requested that the GAO assist us and our Results Act consultation teams by conducting comprehensive evaluations of agency draft strategic plans. Our request included all of the 24 departments and major independent agencies covered by the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act, as well as several other agencies. Given the need to complete Congressional consultations promptly, we further requested that GAO report to us within 30 days following receipt of each agency's draft plan.

In response to our request, GAO submitted a total of 28 reports on agency strategic plans. All of these reports were issued within the 30-day deadline. We understand that this project as a whole involved staff from all of GAO's program divisions and virtually all of its issue areas. The reports were uniformly thorough and insightful. Their detailed analyses and constructive criticisms provided invaluable assistance to us and to our teams. In addition to issuing written products, the GAO staff responsible for each report provided oral briefings to our consultation teams.

GAO's ability to produce so much outstanding work in such a short time period is a tribute to the breadth of knowledge, expertise, and commitment of its outstanding staff. You can rightly take great pride in this effort. It reflects the highest standards of GAO's service to the Congress and to the American taxpayers.

In addition to incorporating much of GAO's analysis in our feedback to the agencies, we shared the GAO reports with the agencies and OMB. We hope and expect that the GAO reports, along with other Congressional input, will lead to much improved final strategic plans by September 30. The development of strategic plans is the first major phase of the Results Act's implementation. The success of the Act's upcoming phases will, in large part, turn on the viability and quality of agency strategic plans. We intend to ask GAO to follow up on its excellent work for us by analyzing the final plans.

We also wish to commend GAO and express our full support for all of the many other excellent projects it has undertaken to support the Results Act. As you know, we view effective implementation of the Results Act as a high priority. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure that this vitally important law achieves its full promise.

Sincerely,

DICK ARMEY,  
House Majority Leader.

DAN BURTON,  
Chairman, House Government Reform and Oversight Committee.

JOHN KASICH,  
Chairman, House  
Budget Committee.  
BOB LIVINGSTON,  
Chairman, House Ap-  
propriations Com-  
mittee.

## MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS

The following individuals were major contributors to GAO's reviews, reports, and briefings on agency draft strategic plans under the Results Act:

## ACCOUNTING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT DIVISION

David B. Alston, Linda F. Baker, Ronald B. Bageant, Jack L. Brock, Jr., Mark Connelly, Michael J. Curro, Kay Daly, Thomas L. Davies, John DeFerrari, Franklin W. Deffer, Cheryl Driscoll, Denise M. Fantone, John P. Finedore, Geoffrey B. Frank, James Hamilton, Laura E. Hamilton, Joan B. Hawkins, Mark E. Heatwole, Gloria L. Jarmon, Anastasia P. Kaluziński, Nancy W. Kong, Linda D. Kooztz, Dianne Langston, Danny R. Latta, Elizabeth M. Mixon, Christie M. Motley, Paul L. Posner, Mark D. Shaw, Brian C. Spencer, and Deborah A. Taylor.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT DIVISION

Teresa Anderson, James M. Blume, Michael Brostek, Lessie M. Burke, James H. Burow, Donna J. Byers, Samuel A. Caldron, Curtis W. Copeland, Charlie W. Daniel, Clifton G. Douglas, Jr., William J. Dowdal, Bryon S. Gordon, Mary B. Hall, Kenneth E. John, Michael H. Little, Robert B. Magnum, Jr., Thomas J. McCool, J. Christopher Mihm, John F. Mortin, John K. Needham, Michael J. O'Donnell, Norman J. Rabkin, David E. Sausville, Dorothy L. Self, Richard M. Stana, Gerald Stankowsky, Alan M. Stapleton, L. Nye Stevens, Bernard L. Ungar, Joseph S. Wholey, Michelle Wiggins, Lynda D. Willis, and Steven J. Wozny.

## HEALTH, EDUCATION AND HUMAN SERVICES DIVISION

Barbara D. Bovbjerg, Lisanne Bradley, Kay E. Brown, Cynthia M. Fagnoni, Harriet C. Ganson, Richard L. Hembra, Charles A. Jeszeck, Carlotta C. Joyner, Marsha Lillie-Blanton, Thomas N. Medvetz, Valerie C. Melvin, Sigurd R. Nilsen, Lori Rectanus, Valerie A. Rogers, Jane L. Ross, Debra B. Sebastian, Vernetta G. Shaw, Bernice Steinhardt, Helene Toiv, Karen A. Whiten, and Greg Whitney.

## NATIONAL SECURITY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

Sharon Chamberlain, Adam Cowles, Frank Degnan, Yolanda C. ElSerwy, Jess T. Ford, David T. Genser, Diana M. Glod, JayEtta Z. Hecker, Jerry Herley, John P. Hutton, Harold J. Johnson, Jr., Kenneth R. Knouse, Jr., Allen Li, James B. Michels, Lynn B. Moore, F. Earl Morrison, Benjamin F. Nelson, Charles L. (Bud) Patton, Jr., Jeffrey D. Phillips, Jean-Paul Reveyoso, Elizabeth Sirois, Lawrence L. Suda, David C. Trimble, David R. Warren, and Barbara L. Wooten.

## OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

Alan N. Belkin, George Bogart, Richard P. Burkard, Robert Crystal, M. Rachel DeMarcus, Helen Desaulniers, Carlos E. Diz, Herbert I. Dunn, Lynn H. Gibson, Jackie A. Goff, Robert J. Heitzman, David Hooper, Julian P. Klazkin, John McGrail, Susan Michal-Smith, Jan B. Montgomery, Maureen A. Murphy, James M. Rebbe, Scott Riback, Jill P. Sayre, Richard Seldin, Dayna Shah, Mark Speight, Adam Vodraska, Michael Volpe, Mindi G. Weisenbloom, Stefanie Weldon, and William T. Woods.

## RESOURCES, COMMUNITY, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

John H. Anderson, Jr., Janet Barbee, Nancy Boardman, Gary R. Boss, Paul Bryant, Carole Buncher, Dennis S. Carroll, Stephen M. Cleary, Eileen M. Cortese, Stanley J. Czerwinski, Sharon Dyer, Judy A. England-Joseph, Larry Goldsmith, Peter F. Guerrero, Jeffrey Heil, Barry T. Hill, Susan D. Kladiva, J. Erin Lansburg, Anu K. Mittal, Philip A. Olean, Victor S. Rezendes, Stan Ritchick, Robert A. Robinson, Phyllis Scheinberg, Marlene S. Shaul, Nancy Simmons, Teresa Spisak, James R. Sweetman, Jr., John Thomson, and Dave Wood.

## ATLANTA FIELD OFFICE

Linda P. Garrison, Diane G. Handley, and Thanomsri S. Piyapongroj.

## KANSAS CITY FIELD OFFICE

Dale A. Wolden.

## SEATTLE FIELD OFFICE

Lacinda Baumgartner.

## DALLAS FIELD OFFICE

Jeanni B. Davis.

## INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO RESTORE THE TAX EXEMPT STATUS OF TIAA-CREF

## HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, recently, Senators MOYNIHAN, D'AMATO, and GRAHAM introduced legislation to repeal the provision in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 which terminated the tax exempt status of TIAA-CREF, the Teacher's Insurance Annuity Association College Retirement Equities Fund. Today, along with Representatives RANGEL, MATSUI, KENNELLY, COYNE, LEWIS of Georgia, and THURMAN, I am introducing companion legislation.

This legislation would simply strike section 1042 of the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 which repeals the tax exempt status of TIAA-CREF and Mutual of America. This legislation would restore the tax exemption that TIAA-CREF has had since its establishment in 1918 by the Carnegie Foundation. TIAA-CREF provides retirement benefits exclusively for employees of U.S. colleges, universities, independent schools and other nonprofit educational and research organizations. TIAA-CREF serves nearly 2 million current and retired employees at over 6,000 institutions. This repeal also would restore the tax exemption for Mutual of America, which has served as pension administrator for welfare organizations for over 50 years and is modeled after TIAA-CREF.

The repeal of TIAA-CREF's 79-year old tax exemption might cost the average retiree who receives a \$12,000 annual pension about \$600 in income and this is a 5-percent reduction in pension benefits. Future retirees currently paying into the system could face reductions as large as 10 to 15 percent. Many of these retirees are not wealthy and they include librarians, assistant professors, and teachers at community colleges.

TIAA-CREF was established to insure that the Nation's college professors had adequate retirement. TIAA-CREF serves as a model for

multiemployer pension plans. The creation of TIAA-CREF enabled teachers to save for retirement even if they moved from school to school. TIAA-CREF has always been well managed and sought to shield unsophisticated investors from too many choices and risks. Throughout its history, TIAA-CREF has maintained a well run pension fund with large reserves. The management of TIAA-CREF has focused on counseling and education. We should be awarding such plans, not punishing them by removing their tax-exempt status. I urge you to join me as an original cosponsor of this legislation.

## CONGRATULATING FORT BENNING FOR BEING AWARDED PRESIDENTIAL AWARD FOR QUALITY

## HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to recognize Fort Benning, GA—the home of the infantry and the Army's premier installation—for being the sole nominee and winner of the 1997 Presidential Award for Quality, recognizing the best Federal agency in the Federal Government.

On July 10, Fort Benning was honored with the award, having already received the Army Community of Excellence Commander-in-Chief's Award for being the best Army installation in the world three times in the last 4 years and the Army Community of Excellence Army Chief of Staff Award for being the best Army installation in the continental United States in each of the last 5 years.

These awards are indicative of both the ability and professionalism of the tens of thousands of soldiers that pass through Fort Benning's gate every year and of the successful partnership that has developed over the years between Fort Benning and the greater Columbus area. No military facility can be fully effective without developing a positive relationship with the local community. Fort Benning has accomplished this and has developed a military/civilian team that is unmatched in its efficiency and effectiveness.

In spite of the fact that the military population of Fort Benning is in a continuous state of transition, the installation has been able to maintain its high standards of quality. This is, in large part, thanks to the nearly 7,000 civilians who work behind the scenes to advance Benning's mission. These are individuals like Sarah McLaney, Fort Benning's ACOE coordinator, who has seen the facility receive the Commander-in-Chief Award under three different commanding generals. Dedicated workers like Sarah have been instrumental not only in achieving Fort Benning's military mission, but also in the development of the strong ties that bind Fort Benning to the Columbus community.

General Ernst and his able staff have further reinforced Fort Benning's longstanding commitment to military quality. Focusing on the watchwords "First in Training, First in Readiness, and First in Quality of Life," Fort Benning soldiers constitute a cornerstone of our Nation's Armed Forces.

Since 1918, Fort Benning has operated the world's foremost military institutional training center. As the home of the infantry, Fort Benning's mission is to produce the world's finest combat-ready infantrymen, to provide the Nation with a power projection platform capable of rapid deployment, and to continue to be the Army's premier installation and home for soldiers, families, civilian employees, and military retirees. This mission is achieved with distinction on a daily basis.

While the Infantry remains the central focus of activity at Fort Benning, a number of other types of units have been added over the years, enhancing the ability of the installation to accomplish its mission. In addition to being home of the infantry, Fort Benning now houses the Airborne School, the Army Ranger School, the 29th Infantry Regiment—training unit for the Bradley fighting vehicle—the 36th Engineer Group, and the U.S. Army School of the Americas. Each of these units works tirelessly to defend our national interests around the world and to serve our communities at home.

To the military and civilian personnel of Fort Benning, I am once again honored to offer my sincere thanks and congratulations for a job well done.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FOOD  
BANK OF NEW JERSEY

**HON. MARGE ROUKEMA**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I had a most remarkable and heartwarming experience yesterday. I visited the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, in Hillside. The Food Bank of New Jersey is a sterling example of how private citizens, church groups, and business volunteers can come together and work hard to improve the lives of the less-fortunate in their community. I want to give my thanks and appreciation to Kathleen DiChiara, executive director of the Community Food Bank of New Jersey, and Sister Christine Vladimiroff, president of Second Harvest, the National Food Bank Network. But most importantly, I want to thank the thousands of volunteers whose hard work and extraordinary dedication make the Food Bank's success possible.

The Food Bank is an amazingly effective organization, distributing as much as 12 dollars' worth of food for each \$1 of its budget. Acting as a sort of wholesale-level savior for the hungry, it distributes an incredible 10 to 14 million pounds of food and other groceries each year to the places where hungry people turn for help—food pantries, shelters for the homeless, soup kitchens child care centers, battered women's shelters, and senior nutrition programs. In all, it serves more than 1,500 organizations in 18 New Jersey counties from its headquarters in Hillside and its Southern Branch in Egg Harbor Township. The Food Bank also operates the extra helping program, the first prepared food rescue program in the state, distributing 30,000 meals a year including kosher meals.

The facilities are impressive: a fully equipped, 280,000-square-foot warehouse,

15,000 square feet of freezer and cooler space, a fleet of trucks on the road daily, including refrigerated trucks, and an experienced, professional staff.

None of this would be possible without volunteers. More than 6,000 people contribute 50,000 hours a year of their time. Many community organizations are involved—the Center for Food Action in Mahwah, the Church of the Presentation in Saddle River, Little Sisters of the Poor in Totowa, the NORWESCAP Food Bank in Phillipsburg, Ridgewood United Methodist Church, and the Salvation Army, to name just a few. The Food Bank is also supported by a number of national organizations such as Bread for the World and Second Harvest, of which it is a member.

Businesses play a huge role in the operation of the Food Bank, with more than 250 companies making large-scale donations of food. The companies that work with the Food Bank are among New Jersey's most outstanding corporate citizens clearly showing their concern for the most basic of human needs.

On the day of my visit, more than 200 volunteers were on hand who had been allowed to take the day away from their regular jobs at KPMG Peat Marwick's Montvale and Short Hills offices in order to help sort food for distribution. Their presence was part of KPMG Peat Marwick's "World of Spirit Day," on which 20,000 employees in 130 offices across the country were given the day off with pay in order to volunteer at schools, hospitals, nursing homes, parks, youth centers, and other locations. This is a wonderful innovation on the part of KPMG Peat Marwick and shows the sincere commitment of this corporation to the communities where it does business. I am fully committed to urging other businesses to establish policies following this outstanding example. KPMG Peat Marwick's effort yesterday, in fact, was part of activities being undertaken by 300 companies across the country to fulfill pledges made 6 months ago at the Summit for America's Future. These companies are answering President Clinton and Congress' call for a nation of volunteers by providing free childhood immunizations, donating computer software to public libraries, and providing free books for schools, among other actions.

The Summit for America's Future has sparked a wave of volunteerism, including 150 State and local minisummits that are spreading the word. We must work, however, to ensure that this is not a one-time occurrence and to show that corporate volunteerism is not a fad. Corporate volunteerism is the right thing to do. It is also good business—consumers will see which companies care about the communities around them.

The need for volunteers—and organizations such as the Food Bank—is great. Between 20 and 30 million Americans suffer from hunger, including 1 of every 12 pre-teen children, according to studies by the Congressional Hunger Center and the Food Research and Action Center. Nearly 26 million Americans rely on food banks for emergency food assistance every year. In my own State of New Jersey, more than 500,000 people depend on food stamps to get by each month. Eleven percent of New Jersey children live below the poverty level and almost 300,000 under the age 12

are hungry or at the risk of hunger. Neither the government nor private organizations can help these people without the assistance of volunteers.

Not all of these hungry children and adults are homeless people on the streets or in other obviously distraught situations. Sometimes they are a single mother, earning minimum wage, who has to decide between getting her car repaired so she can keep her job or buying food to feed her children. A middle-aged homeowner laid off in a corporate downsizing may have exhausted his savings and unemployment benefits. A grandmother living on Social Security might get by on tea and toast in order to pay the rent.

These tragic circumstances in this the most wealthy country in the world must be addressed and eliminated and tragedies such as these are why I am a sponsor of the Hunger Has A Cure Act. The Hunger Has A Cure Act is supported by a large coalition of some of the Nation's largest hunger organizations, including: Bread for the World; the Campaign To End Childhood Hunger; the Center on Hunger, Poverty and Nutrition Policy; Foodchain; the Food Research and Action Center; Results: Second Harvest; Share Our Strength; and World Hunger Year. This bill is essential if we are to protect the safety net for those in need and ensure that the climate of budget cutting in Washington doesn't take the food out of the mouths of hungry babies. As I pledged to the volunteers and directors of the Food Bank yesterday, "I'll be there for you." Just as we saved WIC funding and protected food stamp eligibility this year, I will continue to work to ensure that nutrition programs are protected.

I spent only a short time at the Food Bank but I was inspired to work even harder to complement their work, hard work, energy and dedication, and end hunger in our time. To see the large number of individuals who give freely of their time in order to see that others do not go hungry is heartwarming and inspiring. We have made great progress in caring for the poor and hungry in our Nation but we must do more. We need more organizations like the Food Bank and more individuals like its volunteers. We must all do our part, whether it be by making donations, volunteering time, or helping pass legislation. We cannot stop because the battle will never be won as long as there is one hungry child or adult left in America.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL  
EMPLOYEE THRIFT SAVINGS  
PLAN ENHANCEMENT ACT

**HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation, the Federal Employee Thrift Savings Plan Enhancement Act of 1997, to allow Federal employees to increase their retirement savings. This legislation would bolster a critical component of Federal employee's retirement benefits—the Thrift Savings Plan—at no cost to taxpayers.

The Thrift Savings Plan [TSP] is a retirement savings and investment plan for Federal

and postal employees. It offers the same type of savings and tax benefits that many private corporations offer their employees under 401(k) plans. The TSP is critical for all Federal employees, but it is particularly important for those employees hired in the last decade who, under the Federal Employees Retirement System, receive smaller civil service benefits and need to invest more to enhance their retirement income.

Last year, the Congress passed legislation I introduced that added two new funds to the Thrift Savings Plan. Before my bill was enacted, Federal employees were limited to three investment funds: The Government Securities Investment (G) Fund, the Common Stock Index Investment (C) Fund, and the Fixed Income Investment (F) Fund, where 82 percent of the largest corporations offer four or more investment options in their defined contribution plans, and 50 percent offer five or more options. This legislation, however, gave Federal workers two new investment options under the Thrift Savings Plan: a Small Capitalization Stock Index Investment Fund and International Stock Index Fund. These funds offer a long-term investment strategy comparable to private pension plans.

The Congress did not pass, however, the most important component of the bill: a provision to allow Federal employees to invest more of their own money in the TSP. The bill I am introducing today would allow employees to invest up to the IRS limit, \$9,500, to the TSP without changing the Government contribution. Currently, FERS employees can put in up to 10 percent of their salary with a Government match up to 5 percent, and CSRS employees can invest up to 5 percent of their salary. America has one of the lowest saving rates among industrialized countries. It has fallen steadily over the last 20 years, seriously

jeopardizing Americans' security during what is supposed to be their golden years. Even though Americans recognize that they should be saving more, half of all family heads in their late fifties possess less than \$10,000 in net financial assets. With the retirement of America's baby boomers approaching, Congress is beginning to consider how we can encourage Americans to save more. This legislation is a sensible way to encourage Federal employees to increase their savings for retirement.

This legislation would also allow employees entering the Federal Government to "roll-in" money from a private sector 401(k) to the TSP, and it would allow those employees entering Federal Service to begin contributing to the TSP immediately, instead of waiting anywhere from 6 to 12 months to begin to save for their retirement. As under current law, the Government's contribution would not begin until the second open season.

Federal employees face uncertainty caused by Federal downsizing, and they are increasingly insecure about their retirement. Please join me in supporting this legislation to enable Federal employees to bolster their retirement benefits.

---

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, in the afternoon of Wednesday, September 18, 1997, I was unavoidably delayed from reaching this Chamber and therefore missed rollcall vote No. 402, the vote for final passage on the bill

making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, and related agencies for fiscal year 1998. I want the record to show that if I had been able to be present in this Chamber when this vote was cast, I would have voted "yea."

---

#### TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE JASON HU

**HON. ROBERT SMITH**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, September 23, 1997*

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in paying tribute to Representative Jason Hu on his promotion to the esteemed post of Taiwan's foreign minister.

Representative Hu's promotion requires his return to Taipei and we will miss him a great deal. Representative Hu has been a tireless diplomat for Taiwan and has represented his country's interests well.

Representative Hu is constantly seeking to improve the relations between Taiwan and the United States. He is a true advocate of his country's causes. I commend President Lee for his choice of Representative Hu as Taiwan's top diplomat.

I will miss Representative Hu's presence in Washington but I know for sure that we will have a friend in Taipei who truly understands us and the United States. I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating Representative Hu and in giving him a fond farewell.