

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING OUR VETERANS

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today not to praise the men and women who have served our Nation's Armed Forces, nor enumerate the deeds and sacrifices they have made for this country. I stand today to offer my most sincere gratitude and thanks to these ordinary citizens who have been called to do extraordinary things. As Veterans Day nears, we must ask ourselves what meaning this day has for us all.

This day, formerly known as Armistice Day, was conceived to honor those brave Americans who fought and died in the First World War. In 1938, the Congress passed a law officially making November 11th a national holiday. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, 16 years later in 1954, would sign legislation stating, "to honor Veterans on the 11th day of November each year . . . a day dedicated to world peace," formally recognizing this day as a time to honor those who have served this country.

The 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month, was the precise time which ended the First World War in 1918. That time marked the sacrifice of over 116,000 Americans who lost their lives on the battlefields of Northern France. This global war amassed more than 37 million military casualties, in addition to 10 million deaths among the civilian population. Although the horrors of war had been demonstrated to the world, an ill conceived peace from the Versailles conference, provided the impetus for a repeat of this madness with even deadlier consequences.

This day however, directly challenges those forces in the world that would break the fragile peace we now hold. And as each Veterans Day is celebrated, the fragility of that peace is strengthened and nurtured and allowed to grow; to grow with the hope that the flower it bears is not a poppy of sorrow, but rather a brilliant white rose celebrating peace.

Mr. Speaker, this day causes us all to think and reflect on the reasons why so many of our young men and women have served in our Armed Forces. For me, that answer is simple, to ensure the peace and domestic tranquility of this country. Though these words ring within the Constitution, it is that cause and that sentiment which these dedicated men and women have sworn to uphold. It is for that reason why this Nation in its vigil to maintain the peace, has helped to ensure the peace for the world and for generations of Americans to come.

War may glorify those human qualities which we hold high and dear but how much braver is the soldier standing on guard in 10 degree weather along the DMZ in Korea? How much more courageous is that maintenance

personnel servicing vehicles in a lonely, isolated desert depot, or how dedicated is that medical assistant, routinely tending patients at the base health center, than their predecessors who served during wartime conditions. The sacrifices of our service members today cannot be divorced from those men and women who served in the past.

It is this common thread which holds the very fabric of the peace which shrouds our democracy and our way of life. To forget these links is to weaken the purpose and meaning of this auspicious day. The bright torch of freedom has been handed from our combat veterans to our present day service members. That torch burns brightly as a beacon to the rest of the world that we as a Nation stand ready to defend our hard earned peace.

No Nation can survive alone on the assurances of its technology or economic prowess. The willingness of our common citizenry to commit themselves to the causes of freedom and democracy are the assurances that have ensured the survival and existence of this country.

And so I ask you, Mr. Speaker, and my fellow colleagues, to join with me in not just recognizing but thanking those who have served this Nation. Our gratitude for those servicemen and women of yesterday and today is immeasurable. My simple thanks, is the sincerest form I have, to offer a group of Americans whose service has yielded us the full fruits of freedom. God bless our veterans.

HONORING THE LIFE OF NORMA
JEAN CHURNOCK

HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a loving mother, a compassionate friend, and a dedicated woman of faith—Norma Jean Churnock. While her passing reminds us of our frailty, her persistence, love and devotion remind us of what life really means.

Norma was born in August 1931, and lived her entire life near her hometown of West Covina, CA. Norma was often a quiet woman, but to know her was to have learned volumes about strength from gentleness.

Too often, we find our lives unfocused and off center. We are distracted by the unimportant and we lose sight of what truly matters. This was not so with Norma. The pride of her life was her dedication to ministry and to her extended family at Calvary Bible Church in Glendale, CA.

For over 30 years, Norma served not just the members of our church and her community, but she dedicated her time—quietly and unselfishly—to the people of Los Angeles and

the surrounding communities. Her years of service with the Haven of Rest sent a message of hope, proving that one person can make a difference.

Norma led an exemplary life and brought joy as a mother, a volunteer, and an active member of our church family. As members of Calvary Church we looked to Norma as a dedicated matriarch of our faith. Her dedication carried beyond her love of music shown as a member of our choir. No job was too small; no task too great. Norma lived the exemplary Christian life by dedicating herself to serving those around her, and often those less fortunate than herself.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a dear friend and a dedicated servant. Our solace comes from knowing we are not alone in remembering her and her dedication to all. In recognizing the memory of a true saint, I ask my colleagues to join me here today in saluting her life, and remembering in our prayers the family of Norma Jean Churnock.

IN HONOR OF MATTHEW S. FINLAY
ON HIS ATTAINMENT OF EAGLE
SCOUT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Matthew Finlay of Bay Village, OH, who will be honored for his attainment of Eagle Scout on November 23, 1997.

The attainment of Eagle Scout is a high and rare honor requiring years of dedication to self-improvement, hard work and the community. Each Eagle Scout must earn 21 merit badges, 12 of which are required, including badges in: lifesaving; first aid; citizenship in the community; citizenship in the Nation; citizenship in the world; personal management of time and money; family life; environmental science; and camping.

In addition to acquiring and proving proficiency in those and other skills, an Eagle Scout must hold leadership positions within the troop where he learns to earn the respect and hear the criticism of those he leads.

The Eagle Scout must live by the Scouting Law, which holds that he must be: trustworthy, loyal, brave, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, clean, and reverent.

And the Eagle Scout must complete an Eagle project, which he must plan, finance, and evaluate on his own. It is no wonder that only 2 percent of all boys entering scouting achieve this rank.

My fellow colleagues, let us recognize and praise Matthew for his achievement.

● 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.

HONORING MAJ. GEN. ENOCH H. WILLIAMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and achievements of Councilman Enoch Williams.

While attending the needs of a racially and ethnically diverse constituency, Mr. Williams has been a member of the New York City Council, representing the 41st Councilmanic District, since 1978. Prior to entering elective office, Mr. Williams served as the executive director of the Housing Development Corp. of the Council of Churches of New York City. He was also a community-organization specialist in the now-famous Youth-in-Action, Inc. anti-poverty agency, where he developed the skill of working with community groups, guiding them to create housing and employment in the innercity.

While making important strides in his role as a councilman, Enoch has managed to contribute to his community in other meaningful ways. Currently, he is the civilian director of the New York City region of the Selective Service System. He is a member of the American Institute of Housing Consultants, the Community Service Society, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, and the Unity Democratic Club. In addition, the councilman served as an elected delegate to the 1992 Democratic National Convention, having served in the same capacity in 1968 and 1972. He also served as Democratic district leader from 1986 to 1994.

As a veteran, Major General Williams has again proven his commitment to his country. He was appointed commander of the New York Guard in 1990. After serving as an enlisted member during World War II, General Williams earned his commission in 1950, and has enjoyed over 30 years of active service. His military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Army Commendation Medal, both the Bronze and Silver, and Silver Selective Service System Meritorious Service Medals. He retired in June 1995 as commander of the New York Guard, with the rank of major general.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Councilman Enoch Williams for all of his years of faithful service to his country and to the 41st Councilmanic District of Brooklyn, NY.

TRIBUTE TO HELEN VINCENT

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to extend sincere congratulations to Mrs. Helen Vincent on her retirement from Teamsters Union Local 142 next month. Helen will be honored for her 38 years of dedicated service to the Teamsters at a dinner to be held this Friday, November 7, at the Patio restaurant in Merrillville, IN. Helen's family and

colleagues will be attending this special event, where Rick Kenney, secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 142, will speak in recognition of her outstanding service.

Helen began working as a secretary for Teamsters Local 142 in 1959. Founded in 1941 in Gary, IN, Teamsters Local 142 represents approximately 5,500 laborers in the trucking, warehousing, commercial services, municipalities, and manufacturing industries. Helen's responsibilities at Local 142 have included the preparation of contracts, personal secretarial work for the secretary-treasurer, bookkeeping, and related duties. Throughout her career, Helen's coworkers have regarded her as a very reliable and efficient worker, who always goes above and beyond the call of duty. In addition to her outstanding career with the Teamsters, Helen and her husband of 39 years, Bob, successfully raised two fine sons, Robert and Mark.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in congratulating Helen Vincent on her imminent retirement from Teamsters Local 142. In all aspects of her life, Helen has managed to put forth her best effort for a job well done. Helen's husband, children, and four wonderful grandchildren, Bobby, Megan, Sam, and Teresa, should be proud of her accomplishments, as she has been an invaluable source of guidance and support for both the Teamsters and her family.

COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE
106TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, permit me to take this opportunity to inform my colleagues that the 6th of November is the 106th anniversary of the Colombian National Police [CNP]. The CNP has been our longstanding partner in the war on drugs. The CNP's success has been orchestrated by its director general, Gen. Rosso Jose Serrano, and the fearless leader of the DANTI, their antinarcotics unit. Col. Leonardo Gallego.

Under the leadership of these two outstanding officers, the CNP has received worldwide recognition from the law enforcement community including FBI Director Freeh at a recent International Relations Committee hearing. Under their leadership, the CNP has broken the backs of the world's largest drug cartels in both Medellin and Cali. Their efforts should be duly recognized here today by Congress.

Regrettably, their success has had a price, the lives of more than 4,000 brave young CNP officers over the last 9 years. Their sacrifice cannot be underestimated, or go unnoticed. Their deaths were not in vain. Today, we honor their memories here in the House. Despite the tragedies of their deaths fighting drugs, the DANTI is world renowned for its record on human rights. This is a credit to their dedication to their mission, and a credit to their leaders, General Serrano and Colonel Gallego.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to include, at the conclusion of my remarks, a copy of the letter from myself, Mr. BURTON, Mr. HASTERT, and Mr. BALLENGER to General Serrano congratulating him on this occasion of the 106th anniversary of the CNP.

I know I echo the words of many of my colleagues here today. We thank the Colombian National Police for their outstanding, courageous efforts in the harshest of circumstances. We extend our heartfelt congratulations on their 106th anniversary and wish their continued success in all of their endeavors.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,

Washington, DC, November 5, 1997.

Gen. ROSSO JOSE SERRANO,

Director General, Colombian National Police.

DEAR GENERAL SERRANO: It is with great respect and admiration that we salute the Colombian National Police on this, the 106th anniversary of its inception. The professionalism of your police force has been proven repeatedly under the most adverse challenges imaginable.

The sterling reputation of the Colombian National Police is one that is the envy of law enforcement organizations world-wide. The sacrifices of your policemen have made that reputation what it is today.

We applaud the Colombian National Police's loyalty and your dedication to the principles of law enforcement. We also encourage your adherence to human rights, and salute the DANTI's world-renowned human rights reputation. We salute your continued sacrifices for law and order in a democratic republic.

Finally, please tell your policemen that they are not forgotten.

With best wishes,

DAN BURTON,
Chairman, Government Reform and Oversight Committee.

BEN GILMAN,
Chairman, International Relations Committee.

J. DENNIS HASTERT
Chairman, National Security Subcommittee.

CASS BALLENGER
Vice Chairman, Western Hemisphere Subcommittee.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1119,
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION
ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN M. SPRATT, JR.

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 28, 1997

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my concerns about two provisions in the conference report on H.R. 1119, the Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998. Although I was a member of the conference, I was not a conferee for these provisions and was not aware of their final resolution until the completion of the conference report.

Sections 522 and 523 of H.R. 1119 mandates that the Secretary of Defense submit a

plan to eliminate 4,350 nondual status military technicians. These are Federal civilian employees working for the National Guard and the Army Reserve, often in administrative and administrative support positions, who would not be required to report with their reserve units during a deployment. The bill directs the Secretary to recommend ways to convert the status of these employees if it is determined that their positions can not be eliminated or filled by dual status technicians.

In many cases, these employees fill support positions which would be subject to high turnover if filled by dual status employees. Current nondual status employees have provided stability to these positions, often at low rates of pay. This provision appears to prejudice the need to eliminate these employees before it has been established whether such a move will provide a savings to the Government, or will improve national security. Further, I am troubled that this provision gives the Secretary of Defense no direction on the need to provide for the protection of pension and other employee benefits in the conversion process, especially for those employees whose length of service would reasonably entitle them to expect such benefits.

Second, I am sorely disappointed in the conference reports resolution in regards to a Senate amendment which would have elevated the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to a four-star ranking and made the Chief a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS]. Although I did not support putting the Guard chief of the JCS, I do believe that there is currently a serious problem in resourcing for the Guard which can be improved by elevating the Chief of the Guard. I supported giving the Chief a fourth star and appointing him to the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee [JROC]. Sec. 901, H.R. 1119 instead creates two new assistants to the Chairman of the JCS: one for National Guard Matters and one for Reserve Matters.

Two 2-stars do not make a four star, nor does it solve the real budget problem within the Army. When I and several of my colleagues wrote the Chairman of the National Security Committee to urge the inclusion of legislation that would elevate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau from 3-star to 4-star general and place him on the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee, I believe then, as I believe now, that this is the right thing to do.

There are those critics that argue that making the Chief of the National Guard a four-star would be disruptive to the total force policy or is not justified. I disagree, because there is precedence, just look at the Marine Corps, the commandant of the Marine Corps at one point in time was a three-star general and did not have a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Marine Corps to my knowledge are to this day part of the Navy. The Marine Corps to this day is a shining example of the total force concept, fully integrated across the spectrum and fully funded. Another example is the Coast Guard, while not part of the Department of Defense in peacetime, they support the Navy in times of war. Currently, the Coast Guard has a four-star admiral and four three-star vice admirals, for a \$3.8 billion force of more than 75,000 active and reserve Coast Guard members across the country. The Coast Guard does a

tremendous job of supporting maritime law and drug enforcement, maritime transportation support and disaster assistance in their domestic role. Now let's compare this to the National Guard. The National Guard has a three-star lieutenant general for \$10 billion force of more than 466,000 full-time and part-time members in the Army and Air National Guard who are performing vital missions throughout the country and the world right this minute. This in itself is justification for the National Guard to have a four-star, not to mention that the National Guard has 54 percent of the Army's combat force structure and is located in over 2,700 communities in all States and territories.

Finally, concerning sec. 411, end strengths for Selected Reserve, where the Army National Guard was reduced in endstrength by 5,000 spaces. I do not support reducing the Army National Guard endstrength. The bottomline here is that the Army National Guard is the only service component, active or reserve, to be reduced below the President's budget request. The conference report cites the Army off-site of June 5, 1997 as the reason for reducing the endstrength of the Army National Guard. As I understand the results of the off-site, the active Army should have been reduced by 5,000 spaces as well, but that was not included in this bill. In fact the Army is not able to meet its endstrength. In fact the Army National Guard is currently meeting its endstrength goals. It makes it very difficult to justify reducing the Army National Guard, in essence punishing them for meeting their strength.

In conclusion, I believe that the provisions I have mentioned do nothing to enhance the resourcing and readiness issues faced by the National Guard and Reserve. I do believe that we should revisit these provisions next year as we prepare the fiscal year 1999 Defense authorization bill.

HONORING HERRICKS MIDDLE
SCHOOL

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Herricks Middle School in Albertson, NY, which has recently received a Blue Ribbon Award for academic excellence by the Department of Education. The school will be honored in a ceremony with Education Secretary, Richard Riley on November 6.

Herricks Middle School strives to give every student the most well rounded education possible by fostering each child's cognitive, social, and physical development. Students are required to take a seventh grade guidance class, where they can initiate a positive relationship with a guidance counselor, early on in their academic careers. The school's academic teams, which consist of teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and parents, focus upon each individual student, in order to provide critical support during difficult times. Herricks Middle School also has a diverse and innovative extracurricular program.

The school has also placed an important focus upon computer literacy programs. The administration has recognized that a computer in a classroom may not necessarily foster a student's education unless a teacher is fully versed in the proper technology. Thus, a part time staff member has been hired to train teachers in computer technology and help them apply it in a classroom setting. Since this training program was implemented, computer use by teachers has tripled.

The school's innovative curriculum also includes interdisciplinary units on the Holocaust and immigration. All of these factors have combined to create an extraordinary learning environment. The average daily attendance rate at Herricks Middle School exceeds an astounding 96 percent. The school's average standardized test scores in reading and math fall between the 82d and 92d percentiles nationwide. Much of this success can also be attributed to the leadership and commitment of the school's principal, Dr. Seth Weitzman.

Herricks Middle School is working to build tomorrow's leaders through innovative academic and guidance programs, constant teacher training, and diversified extracurricular activities. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring this school for their extraordinary work and congratulating them on receiving the prestigious Blue Ribbon Award.

HONORING THE SUNY/BROOKLYN
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
CENTER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to acknowledge that on November 7, 1997, the SUNY/Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center will celebrate 30 years of service to the borough of Brooklyn and the city of New York.

The center was established in 1966 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller, the New York State Legislature, and State University of New York. Throughout the years, the Brooklyn Center has served over 200,000 residents, enrolled 50,000 students and graduated approximately 28,000 adults and young adults. These graduates have become high school principals, corporate executives, college professors, city and State employees, secretaries, computer technicians, and mechanical drafters. Over the past 5 years the Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center's alumni have contributed \$7 million to the city and State treasuries. This program has also made it possible for 800 former welfare recipients to become gainfully employed.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to congratulate SUNY/Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center, and to wish them many more productive and prosperous years.

HONORING GREG LAIS, EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF WILDERNESS IN-
QUIRY

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, on October 22 I had the pleasure of hosting the signing event that celebrated the establishment of a general framework of cooperation—a memorandum of understanding—between the Federal land management agencies and a private entity, Wilderness Inquiry. These agreements have a positive goal of increasing opportunities for people of all abilities to get out and enjoy America's public lands. I was joined by Chairman Jim Hansen and a number of representatives of Federal agencies who have dedicated their work to increasing access to our Nation's special places for all Americans. None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of an extraordinary Minnesotan, Greg Lais.

Since 1978, Wilderness Inquiry has served 30,000 people of all abilities on trips throughout North America, Europe and Australia. Greg Lais observes, "Meeting new friends, exploring wilderness areas, and participating in exciting outdoor activities is what Wilderness Inquiry is all about. Be prepared to step out of your normal routine and enter a world where time is measured by the sun and movement governed by wind and weather."

"In addition to having fun," Lais continues, "you'll have the opportunity to learn about a variety of topics, including the history and ecology of the areas you travel. And, since Wilderness Inquiry strives to include a diverse group of participants—including persons with disabilities—it's likely that you'll learn a bit about other people—and yourself—in the process."

With the signing of a memorandum of understanding [MOU] between Wilderness Inquiry and the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, more people will have the wealth of opportunities observed as our American experience and legacy. Wilderness Inquiry's expertise in service delivery will surely help the agencies achieve the goal of providing outdoor recreation programs and services that are accessible to all Americans. And Wilderness Inquiry's expertise is readily apparent: more than half of the people Wilderness Inquiry serve have physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities. Indeed, when a person with a disability calls Wilderness Inquiry and expresses a desire to experience the outdoors, Greg Lais and his talented staff figure out how to do it—not why it can't and shouldn't be done.

Wilderness Inquiry's program focus of integrating people from diverse backgrounds and ability levels has proven effective at fostering dignity, independence, and social integration. A lot of positive steps have already been taken. In 1991 Wilderness Inquiry completed a study on behalf of the National Council on Disability to determine the ability of people with

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disabilities to enjoy wilderness. That study came forward with a number of recommendations, many of which are currently being implemented. These includes suggestions and programs for training Federal employees, guidelines for policy implementation, and recommendations for service providers.

But much more remains to be done, and that is what this special agreement between Wilderness Inquiry and the Federal land managers is focused upon. It signals a Federal agency commitment to making our public lands accessible so that all Americans appreciate our rich natural and cultural heritage. The benefits to all Americans will be great. Customers will be better served and more satisfied, awareness of our great outdoors will be enhanced, and we will be on the road to achieving equal access to the comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities included in the Americans With Disabilities Act.

That is why I rise today to pay tribute to Greg Lais, a person who embodies the spirit of serving the public that makes this Minnesotan such a special person. His organization is doing good work, and for that I believe he deserves the respect and thanks of this House, this Congress, and the American people.

**IN HONOR OF GRANT A. KNISELY
ON HIS ATTAINMENT OF EAGLE
SCOUT**

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Grant Knisely of Bay Village, OH, who will be honored for his attainment of Eagle Scout.

The attainment of Eagle Scout is a high and rare honor requiring years of dedication to self-improvement, hard work, and the community. Each Eagle Scout must earn 21 merit badges, 12 of which are required, including badges in: lifesaving; first aid; citizenship in the community; citizenship in the Nation; citizenship in the world; personal management of time and money; family life, environmental science; and camping.

In addition to acquiring and proving proficiency in those and other skills, an Eagle scout must hold leadership positions within the troop where he learns to earn the respect and hear the criticism of those he leads.

The Eagle Scout must live by the Scouting Law, which holds that he must be: trustworthy, loyal, brave, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, clean, and reverent.

And the Eagle Scout must complete an Eagle Project, which he must plan, finance, and evaluate on his own. It is no wonder that only 2 percent of all boys entering scouting achieve this rank.

My fellow colleagues, let us recognize and praise Grant for his achievement.

November 4, 1997

A TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J.
MURRAY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, one of my more remarkable constituents, Thomas J. Murray of Walden, NY, is going to be honored by the Walden Rotary Club in a few weeks for a lifetime of devotion to his community and his family. I would like to take this opportunity to share his life story with our colleagues so that they can join us in saluting an outstanding American citizen.

Tom Murray was born on August 3, 1914, in the town of Newburgh on a family homestead populated not only by his parents, but also by his three siblings, Dorothy, Anna, and Jack, by aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives. There were many adults interested in the future of young Tom who made certain the young man was raised on the straight and narrow. Tom was a student in the Newburgh school system and a graduate of Newburgh Free Academy.

In World War II, Tom was drafted into the service, and served in the 20th Air Force 58th Bomb Group as an engineer and a rear gunner on a B-29 aircraft. The 58th Bomb Group was one of the outstanding combat groups of the Second World War, and Tom was instrumental as an executive board member in keeping their annual reunion running smoothly for over 40 years. To honor those who served in the Army Air Corp, the group commissioned an original oil painting of the B-29 which now is on display at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy at Annapolis, the Air Force Academy in Colorado, and at the Air and Space Museum right down the street from the Capitol.

In 1942, Tom married the former Helen Alice Romash, now deceased. Helen was from Walden, NY, about 7 miles west of Tom's home in the town of Newburgh. The young couple settled in Walden where Tom remains until this day, even after the passing of Helen a few years ago. Tom and Helen had two lovely children, Patricia and Dennis.

When World War II ended, Tom went to work for the DuPont Chemical Co. in Newburgh. In the mid-1960's, when DuPont moved their plant to South Carolina, Tom went along to help set up the new plant down south. However, he refused to give up his Walden home and returned to check his home and to visit family and friends quite often during his 1 year in South Carolina. Tom finally decided to come back home to Walden once and for all.

Tom is the personification of the community activist. A long time parishioner at Most Precious Blood Catholic Church, he served for many years as an usher and was an important component in the successful efforts to raise building funds for the parochial school.

Tom also served as chairman of the March of Dimes for the town of Montgomery, of which Walden is a part, and was in charge of the food distribution program for seniors and low-income families.

Tom has also been a mainstay in the Walden Volunteer Fire Department for many

years. He has served as an on-the-line fireman and as a fire policeman.

He has served as a member of the planning committee, and thus played a major role in the planned growth of the village of Walden, a concept he has always supported.

Tom is known in his home community and throughout his home County of Orange as "Mr. Republican." He has never wavered in his support of Republican causes, and is known for his outspoken honesty. He recently celebrated his 30th anniversary as a Republican committeeman representing Election District No. 8, and from 1982 until he voluntarily stepped down in September of this year having served as chairman of the Republican Committee of the Town of Montgomery.

Mr. Speaker, I have always considered it an honor to consider Tom Murray as a friend. Throughout his remarkable career, he is an individual who can always be counted upon for honest answers, penetrating questions, and genuine loyalty. The Walden Rotary Club tribute to Tom is in long overdue.

Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join in applauding an outstanding human being, Tom Murray of Walden, NY.

CONGRATULATIONS TO JAMES
AND ANNA MAE GAMBLE ON
THEIR 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Gamble on their 50th wedding anniversary. While raising their six children, Mr. Gamble worked as a printer and Mrs. Gamble worked as a supervisor with the Home Energy Assistant Program. Currently, they are proud parents of 6 children and grandparents to 13 grandchildren.

Over the years, Mr. and Mrs. Gamble have been strong supporters of their community. Because of his solid presence in their neighborhood, Mr. Gamble is often spoken of as the "Mayor" of Jefferson Avenue. As a past president of the Sand T Block Association, Mrs. Gamble has spent inexhaustible hours contributing to efforts which have made that community close knit.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating them in passing this milestone in their lives.

UNRECOGNIZED SOUTHEAST ALASKA
NATIVE COMMUNITIES RECOGNITION ACT

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Unrecognized Southeast Alaska Native Communities Recognition Act. This legislation provides long overdue recognition of five Native communities of Haines, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Tenakee, and

Wrangell, which were wrongly denied the opportunity to establish and enroll in a Native corporation under the terms of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act [ANCSA]. The act also provides for a process to determine the lands or other appropriate compensation for the communities.

This legislation is intended to rectify an injustice that is over 25 years old. In 1971, ANCSA was enacted as the means to settle the aboriginal claims of Alaska Natives to their traditional homelands. The law provided for the establishment of Native Corporations, which were awarded land and compensation. Natives could enroll to 1 of 13 regional corporations and, within the geographic area of their regional corporation, to the village where they lived or had historic, culture, or familial ties.

However, Natives in the five southeast Alaska villages of Haines, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Tenakee, and Wrangell, were not recognized in ANCSA, and therefore were denied the ability to form Native corporations. The legislative and historical record of ANCSA does not clearly provide a reason for leaving these villages out of the process of forming Native corporations.

A study ordered by Congress in 1993 examined why the five unrecognized communities were denied eligibility to form Native corporations. The study found that there was no meaningful distinction between the five communities and other communities in southeast Alaska recognized in ANCSA, and thus no justification for omission of the Native communities of Haines, Ketchikan, Petersburg, Tenakee, and Wrangell from eligibility to form urban or group corporations under ANCSA.

The Natives and their heirs in these communities deserve the chance to enroll to Native corporations. The legislation I am introducing simply grants recognition to these communities and enables them to form Native corporations. The bill also directs the Secretaries of Interior and of Agriculture to submit a report to Congress regarding lands or other compensation that should be provided to the new urban and group corporations that are established.

This is the first, but most important step to bringing the struggle of the Natives of five southeast Alaska communities to a close.

INTRODUCTION OF THE RHINO
AND TIGER PRODUCT LABELING
ACT: NOVEMBER 4, 1997

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. SAXTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce today, along with my colleague, GEORGE MILLER, the Rhino and Tiger Product Labeling Act of 1997.

This legislation will amend the landmark Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act of 1994, Public Law 103-391, to ensure that no person may import any product labeled or containing any species of rhinoceros or tiger into, or export any such product from, the United States.

Regrettably, all five species of both rhinoceros and tigers are critically endangered. For nearly 20 years they have been listed as endangered on both appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora [CITES] and our own Endangered Species Act.

In the case of tigers, their future is particularly bleak. In fact, it has been estimated that there are now less than 5,000 animals living in the wild, which is a 95-percent decline from the beginning of this century. There are fewer than 500 South China and Siberian tigers left in the world. Despite the enactment of Public Law 103-391 and the approval of several valuable tiger rescue grants financed by the Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Fund, these irreplaceable species continue to be killed by poachers for their fur, as well as for other body parts. Shamans and practitioners of traditional medicine, especially the Chinese, value almost every part of the cat.

Tiger bone powders and tablets have been used for generations to combat pain, kidney, and liver problems, rheumatism, convulsions, and heart conditions.

Mr. Speaker, the population estimates for the rhinoceros are slightly better than tigers with 11,000 animals living in the wild. Nevertheless, there are several rhino species that are teetering on extinction. For instance, there are only 100 Javan and fewer than 500 Sumatran rhinos left on this planet.

While human population growth and competition for land have contributed to the destruction of rhinoceros habitat, the major cause of this species' decline has been the insatiable demand for products made from rhino horn. In Asia, rhinoceros horn obtained almost exclusively from illegal sources has been used for generations to treat headaches and fever in children.

By killing these flagship species, poachers are reaping huge financial rewards. In fact, Asian rhino horn is selling for up to \$60,000 per kilogram and tiger bones can sell for over \$1,400 a pound.

In order to save these species, we must eliminate the market for these products and stop consumers from purchasing medicines made from endangered rhinos and tigers. While it may be difficult to change traditional healing practices in China, Taiwan, and Vietnam, we can stop their importation into the United States.

I am told that on any given day, a consumer can visit a drug store or pharmacy in such cities as Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC, and purchase prepackaged medicines that clearly indicate they contain rhino and tiger parts. While some U.S. Customs agents will confiscate these products prior to importation, unfortunately it is virtually impossible to conclusively determine even in a laboratory that the active ingredients in the medicine originated from a rhinoceros or a tiger.

We can solve this problem by enacting the Rhino and Tiger Product Labeling Act. This legislation stipulates that if a label on a product says that it contains rhinoceros or tiger parts, then we can prevent it from coming into the United States by making the legal presumption, without any further scientific tests or

analysis, that it violates our trade laws. In essence, it is a Truth in Labeling for these endangered species and if manufacturers choose to try to sell their medicines without a reference to rhinos or tigers, then consumers are not likely to purchase them.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any hope of saving rhinoceros or tigers for future generations, then we must stop the sale of products containing these animals and 1998 is the year of the tiger according to the Chinese calendar, and passage of this bill would be an effective way to celebrate this occasion.

I would urge my colleagues to join with me in this vital effort by cosponsoring the Rhino and Tiger Product Labeling Act of 1997. I would also like to thank the World Wildlife Fund and Traffic U.S.A. for their outstanding leadership in this issue and for dramatizing the plight of rhinos and tigers. We must work to ensure that the last rhino and tiger is not killed on our watch.

A TRIBUTE TO THE CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH OF STONY BROOK, LONG ISLAND

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate the Christ Community Church of Stony Brook, Long Island, as the church's members and friends celebrate its 30th anniversary year.

For more than three decades, before Christ Community Church was built, the Reformed Church of America has served the spiritual needs of this bucolic North Shore community. Since the founding of the Christ Community Church in 1967, a myriad of forces have changed the cultural, commercial, and political face of America and Long Island. But the steadfast devotion of the Christ Community Church and its members has neither wavered nor waned.

The origin of the Christ Community Church followed the 1962 birth of the State University of New York at Stony Brook. The new college and research hospital brought new jobs, thousands of new residents, and a demand for new houses of worship in this sleepy hamlet. So on land donated by businessman and legendary Long Island philanthropist Ward Melville, the Reformed Church of America began plans for its newest congregation.

So hungry for Christ's words were the first congregants that during construction the first pastor, Rev. Howard Newton, would lead the 50 charter members in worship in the garage of a home on Stockton Lane, in Stony Brook. Though the building was not fully complete and congregants had to use wooden planks to navigate across a sea of mud and puddles, the first formal worship service was held there on Palm Sunday, 1967.

Since its inception, congregants of Christ Community Church has sought to discover and apply Christ's word by serving God and community. Whether hosting the first organizational meetings of the Three Village School District, donating food, clothes, and money to

the ministries at Coram or opening their doors to the Beth Emeth Reformed Congregation so that they could hold Sabbath services while their synagogue in Mt. Sinai was being built, the members of Christ Community Church have worked to serve their neighbors.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in this hallowed Chamber to join me in congratulating the members of the Christ Community Church, and all of its friends and neighbors, on this historic 30th anniversary year. I pray that the Stony Brook community and all Long Island will forever enjoy the spirit of the Christ Community Church and the good work of its members.

HONORING NANCY L. SCHUCKMAN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and achievements of Nancy L. Schuckman. Ms. Schuckman was born in the east New York section of Brooklyn and has dedicated her professional life to educating the children in that area.

Soon after Nancy graduated from Brooklyn College in 1961, she began her career teaching at P.S. 202. For over 30 years Nancy has managed to provide invaluable services to everyone at P.S. 202. While working at the school, Ms. Schuckman has served as, an innovative and dedicated classroom teacher, a coordinator of social studies, reading, and physical education, a teacher trainer, a UFT chapter chairperson, an acting assistant principal, and a principal. Rarely, do we see the type of commitment, to an area and school, like that shown by Nancy Schuckman to P.S. 202.

There is no doubt that she has left an indelible mark on all the teachers and students that she has come in contact with. Her professionalism and her dedication to education, and the style in which it is administered to students, is the benchmark for others who follow in her footsteps.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in honoring Ms. Schuckman and all her contributions in the field of education.

HONORING SEYMOUR AND LOTTE MEYERSON

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to commend two of northwest Indiana's outstanding citizens, Seymour and Lotte Meyerson. The Meyersons, who have lived in the Miller section of Gary for the last 45 years of their 54-year marriage, will be moving from northwest Indiana later this month. As they leave the region, the many accomplishments they have made in advocating individual human rights and liberties will be fondly remembered.

The Meyersons' long-time commitment to the ideals of dignity and rights for all human beings has brought positive change to the communities of northwest Indiana. Lotte Meyerson, a dedicated citizen activist, has made a campaign out of her devotion to human rights. Perhaps her most noteworthy contribution to the community was her leadership in forming the northwest Indiana Open Housing Center, of which she was president for 10 years. During her tenure with this organization, great strides were made in eliminating the institutional discrimination that prevents minorities from integrating into predominantly white neighborhoods. Lotte has further served her community by participating in activities with the Calumet Chapter of the Indiana Civil Liberties Union, the Gary League of Women Voters, and the Northwest Indiana Welfare Reform Coalition. Currently, she is serving as coordinator of the Northwest Indiana Coalition to Abolish Control Unit Prisons. This year, the coalition was successful in convincing the Indiana General Assembly to agree to study the advisability of limiting solitary confinement to 2 months or less and banning the practice for mentally ill prisoners.

A chemist specializing in mass spectrometry, Seymour Meyerson has made numerous professional contributions while maintaining his respect for nature and all of humanity. An Amoco employee for 37 years, Seymour advanced to the top of his field and, throughout his career, shared his technical findings in international science circles. Just recently, Seymour unselfishly donated his collection of mass spectrometry journals, which are worth \$26,000, to Valparaiso University's chemistry department. Seymour shares his wife's deep-rooted convictions regarding the need to protect civil liberties.

The Meyersons will be moving to Asheville, N.C., where they will be living in a co-housing development community, which was founded on principles in keeping with their own. This unique living situation combines private homes with community living, and is modeled after a housing concept common in Denmark. Residents of the development, who are diverse in every respect, share a common house, where they can dine and share hobbies together, and common gardens, which are designed to foster a sense of community and belonging. Lotte and Seymour will be joining the family of their younger daughter, Elana Kohnle, as well as 24 other families in this community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my other distinguished colleagues to join me in commending Seymour and Lotte Meyerson on the hard work and dedication they have put forth in achieving a better life for everyone in northwest Indiana. May their new life bring them much happiness and fulfillment.

CAPITAL GAINS TAX SIMPLIFICATION

HON. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that removes the short-

mid-, and long-term distinctions on capital gains tax which were part of previous law and included in the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. This change simplifies capital gains tax assessments by removing arbitrary time constraints and applying the rates now, instead of in 2006. Without this change, gains made within the short- and mid-term rates will receive no tax break at all unless they are held for excessive periods of time.

The very idea of the Federal Government dictating time constraints on the holding of investments runs counter to the fundamental concept of our market-driven economy. With present holding periods, how can we conclude that an 18-month investment is better than a 17.9-month investment? For example, if an investor reaped \$1,000 in capital gains, they would receive a return of \$602 after taxes if they held it for 17 months and 30 days. But, after holding it for 1 day more, their after-tax return would jump to \$720. That is a ridiculous 20 percent difference in 1 day. This legislation removes these conditions.

As we discuss the modification and simplification of the present Tax Code, this bill demonstrates Congress' desire to bring about an immediate beneficial change. It is becoming more and more evident that the Tax Code is a growing impediment to families, small business, and investors. While we conduct hearings and debate on what changes are to be made, streamlining the capital gains tax regulations in the interim shows the American people we are making progress toward a simple and lasting solution.

No changes in the gains tax percentages are made in this measure. The rates, agreed to by the Clinton administration earlier this year, would simply be applied without the time constraints. It is not only bipartisan, but logical as well. No concessions are made to corporate or big business capital gains taxes, nor is this bill designed to aid the wealthy. It allows individuals the opportunity to make investment decisions based on the market, rather than by obtuse Government time constraints. The rates in the present law are fair, the holding periods are not.

Mr. Speaker, this is a tremendous opportunity to help American families invest for their future. This bill removes frustrating obstacles for small businesses and investors who are often stymied in their efforts to reinvest their gains immediately because of the excessive losses they would incur under current law.

I urge my colleagues to support this technical change to the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997. Removing the time constraints on capital gains tax demonstrates our desire to simplify the Tax Code and help Americans invest without unnecessary restrictions.

PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT
EMPLOYEES

HON. THOMAS J. MANTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the late John Sturdivant, Presi-

dent of the American Federation of Government Employees.

Mr. Sturdivant passed away on October 28, 1997, after a long, heroic fight against leukemia. I extend my most heartfelt condolences to Mr. Sturdivant's family. I hope it is of some comfort to the family to know that John greatly improved the lives of many through his work with the AFGE.

Through charismatic and innovative leadership, John Sturdivant brought the American Federation of Government Employees to prominence. He strived to increase wages and improve working conditions and benefits for Federal employees. Whether faced with government downsizing or budget cuts, John Sturdivant would face the situation with strength and determination. He consistently, and successfully, fought for Federal employees and the 600,000 workers he represented are sure to feel his loss.

John Sturdivant will be missed not only by his family, but by all the Federal employees he represented, as well as those with whom he bargained. It is a rare individual who possesses the talent and skills demonstrated by John Sturdivant in his many years of service to the labor movement.

Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to John Sturdivant for his achievements as the progressive leader of the American Federation of Government Employees.

BISHOP WILLIAM SWING OF THE
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF CALI-
FORNIA DISCUSSES THE UNITED
RELIGIOUS INITIATIVE, AN EF-
FORT TO ENCOURAGE PEACE
AND RESPECT FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, the Right Reverend William Swing, Bishop of the Diocese of California of the Episcopal Church in the United States, is one of the outstanding religious leaders of our Nation. We in the bay area have the great blessing of having him in our city of San Francisco. Bishop Swing is an extraordinary man who is dedicated to promoting peace and respect for human rights around the globe. Throughout his life, he has also been sincerely dedicated to helping the homeless, the elderly, and the sick.

Recently, Bishop Swing has launched the United Religions Initiative which seeks to unite all religions in order to establish peace among them. In a world where blood is often shed in the name of religious belief, the United Religions Initiative is working toward the reconciliation of religious groups for the good of all nations.

Mr. Speaker, on October 29, Bishop Swing made a presentation at a briefing of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus to discuss the United Religions Initiative with Members of Congress and congressional staff. I had the pleasure of introducing Bishop Swing and spending time with him on that occasion as he presented his ideas for encouraging peace and respect for human rights.

I ask, Mr. Speaker, that Bishop Swing's remarks at this recent meeting of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give thoughtful and serious considerations to the ideas of this dedicated man of God.

REMARKS OF BISHOP WILLIAM SWING TO THE
CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS

I would like to call attention to an Initiative that could have a profound influence on global peacemaking. I am referring to the United Religions Initiative. This initiative seeks to create a new global forum where the world's faith communities, continuing to respect each others distinctness, would meet together on a daily and permanent basis to deepen mutual understanding, recognition and respect; to create an open dialogue for exchanging ideas and finding a common voice; and to cooperate in new ways to address urgent suffering. This effort would create for the world's religions a forum with the stature and visibility of the United Nations.

As the people of the world work together to shape a new world order following the end of the Cold War, we confront enormous questions. How can we ensure peace? How can the world's people live together as neighbors? What structures of cooperative effort can help us to secure a decent world for our grandchildren? And what visions can guide us as we consider these questions? Finding answers together will require not only new ways of thinking and new voices at the table, but also a firm foundation of shared spiritual values. In this conversation, the world's religions must necessarily be involved.

When we look to our religious traditions for guidance, however, we must first acknowledge a hard truth: while religions historically have been an immense source of good, they have also been the direct cause of much violent conflict. When not actually fighting themselves, they have all too often fanned the flames of hatred, or stood mute in the presence of injustice. Not one of the original founders of the world's religions taught murder, coercion or injustice as a way of propagating the faith; and yet religious violence continues to this day, deeply injuring the moral credibility of our religious institutions. Moreover, such violence is increasingly a major threat to world peace. Much of the large scale violence in the world today—in Bosnia, Chechnya, Palestine, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and East Timor, for example—is caused, encouraged or abetted by religion.

And yet the world's religions are also humanity's great treasure houses, where our deepest values, aspirations and wisdom have been sustained. It is religion that reminds us that life is ultimately larger than what we know; that life is sacred; that each of us is called to act responsibly in light of these truths; and that the deepest meanings of life are to be found beyond narrow self-interest. Religions are our window to a larger life, a life beyond ourselves. Drawing on their deepest sources, could they themselves now set an example of how we all might live with one another as neighbors? It is the conviction of the United Religions Initiative that this is indeed the challenge.

The Initiative owes much to previous interfaith efforts. Over the last 100 years, many have worked to begin dialogue and cooperation among people of different faiths. On the local level, interfaith cooperation is already rapidly emerging in hospital ministries, jail ministries, and university campus ministries. Cities around the world are

developing interfaith commissions. National interfaith coalitions are beginning to appear. And a few groups, such as the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, the Temple of Understanding, the International Association for Religious Freedom, and the World Conference on Religion and Peace, have undertaken significant international dialogues and action projects. All of these distinct efforts have begun to provide an infrastructure of interfaith work throughout the world; and all of this deserves to be acknowledged and genuinely celebrated.

Given this present level of interreligious activity, and the world's search for a new foundation of shared values, is there anything else that could happen among religions beyond what already exists? The answer is an emphatic yes. There is a vast untapped potential for partnership among the world's religions that could be an enormous resource for peace-making and community building. If religions themselves could move just one step beyond their ancient competitions and attempt a new dimension of religious cooperation, a great new focus for global hope would be forthcoming. And if religions, continuing to respect their differences, were then able to join their enormous resources in a serious, mutual effort of service to the world, a tremendous new force for global good would come into being.

The United Religions Initiative is an attempt to call together members of the world's religions and spiritual traditions to create a comprehensive global framework for just such an effort. With the help of an organizational development team from Case Western Reserve University, they are building a worldwide network of supporters at the grassroots level, while simultaneously overseeing a large scale collaborative process of writing an organizational charter for a United Religions Organization. This charter will be formally signed on June 26, 2000, the 55th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. Currently, the Initiative has active, committed groups on six continents, and they will hold some 15 regional conferences during the coming 18 months. They are committed to the inclusion of youth, women and indigenous traditions as full partners in this effort.

One key initial project of the Initiative is a call for twenty-four hours of non-violence and making peace among faith communities on December 31st, 1999. Organized through a large partnership of supporting organizations, this call will invite people around the world to one day of individual and community reflection, repentance, and resolution to offer each faith's deepest values as a gift for the new millennium. The logistical challenges of such an immense project are daunting; on the other hand, the overriding vision is that for this one day, the global hope of a United Religions could actually become a lived reality.

A United Religions would have much to offer the world as we move into the next millennium. Where economic and political solutions by themselves have proved inadequate, it could offer deeper, value-based visions of global possibility. It could directly address many of those deeper problems which are beyond the capabilities of government. Most importantly, as we move into an uncertain future, a United Religions could offer the world a powerful new vision of hope—the vision that the deepest stories we know can now cease to be causes of separation between people, and become instead the foundation for a reunited humanity.

HONORING REGINALD B. ALLEN

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and achievement of Reginald B. Allen, Jr. His dedication to the city of New York, and the country has proven incomparable.

For 26 years, Mr. Allen served as a gunnery sergeant in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. Mr. Allen also served in the Korean and Vietnam conflicts before retiring from service in 1980. Mr. Allen has worked hard to improve the lives of fellow veterans, he was appointed by Mayor Edward I. Koch to the Veterans Advisory Board of New York City's Office of Veterans Affairs and the New York Korean Veterans Memorial Commission. Presently, he is a member of the New York State Senate's Veterans Advisory Council.

Mr. Allen has always been committed to bringing vital services to the people of New York City. After joining the Addiction Services Agency as a supervising addiction specialist, Mr. Allen has supervised the Court Referral Project to the Kings County Criminal Court and has supervised drug specialists who referred addicts and abusers to programs for treatment in place of incarceration. Currently, he is a supervisor for the Food Stamps Program of the Human Resources Agency. Clearly, our district has only benefited from his tireless efforts.

Mr. Speaker, the Council of the City of New York have honored Mr. Allen with a proclamation; I join them in congratulating Mr. Reginald Allen for all of his years of service.

"ROFEH INTERNATIONAL CONTINUES ITS EXCELLENT WORK"

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to continue what has become for me an important tradition—recognizing here the great work done by ROFEH International, a project sponsored by the New England Chassidic Center located in Brookline, MA. ROFEH International, like the New England Chassidic Center, is led by Grand Rabbi Levi Horowitz, known as the Bostoner Rebbe.

In addition to his religious leadership and scholarship, Rabbi Horowitz has become an expert in the field of medicine, and especially of medical ethics. His work on medical ethics is widely consulted, and as befits a religious leader who is dedicated to the welfare of others, Rabbi Horowitz has put the concept of medical ethics to work in a very important way through ROFEH International. ROFEH exists to help people from all over the world get access to first rate medical care which they would not otherwise have. Bringing people who could not otherwise afford it to Boston to be treated at the outstanding medical institutions which are so important in our metropoli-

tan area is extraordinarily important work, and it is a concept which Rabbi Horowitz and his colleagues in ROFEH pioneered and have implemented brilliantly.

On November 23, 1997, a dinner will be held in Boston to celebrate the work of ROFEH, and this year, as in the past, the dinner will pay tribute to two particularly outstanding individuals. These two men are Dr. Benjamin Rabinovici and Dr. Andrew L. Warsaw.

The 1997 Man of the Year, Dr. Benjamin Rabinovici was born in Romania. He studied at the well known Vizhinitzer Yeshiva where he granted S'micha. Following his years at the Yeshiva he went to the Polytechnic University of Bucharest where he graduated with a B.S. degree in electrical engineering. When he immigrated to the United States in 1951, he continued his education at Columbia University where he received an M.S. degree in electrical engineering and the degree of Ph.D. in applied physics.

Dr. Rabinovici held senior scientific and managerial positions at CBS Laboratories, RCA, IBM and Honeywell. He left Honeywell for an academic appointment as professor of electrical engineering and computer science at Northeastern University. He published extensively in scientific and technical journals, holds numerous patents, and is a senior member of IEEE, American Physical Society, and New York Academy of Science.

Dr. Rabinovici is president and CEO of International Microwave Corp. and Tympanium Corp. He is founder and director of Parlex Corp. and is a trustee of Natick Village Investments. He is also in a number of Jewish organizations and is a trustee of Maimonides School.

Joining Dr. Rabinovici as an honoree is Dr. Andrew L. Warsaw who will receive the coveted Harry Andler Memorial Award.

Dr. Andrew L. Warsaw was born in New York. He received his A.B. from Harvard College, Cambridge, MA, (cum laude) and his M.D. from Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA, (magna cum laude). Dr. Warsaw fulfilled his surgical internships and residencies at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA.

Dr. Warsaw is the recipient of many awards including a Phi Beta Kappa, Alpha Omega Alpha and the Good Physician Award of the Massachusetts Medical Society.

Dr. Andrew L. Warsaw is one of the world's leading surgeons and is internationally renowned for his care of patients and research in pancreatic disease. He is surgeon-in-chief and chairman of the Department of Surgery, Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston, MA.

Dr. Warsaw has served on many major committees. Amongst them are the Committee on Research, chairman of the Massachusetts General Staff Associates Executive Board, Operating Room Advisory Committee, chairman of the Committee on Future of Department of Surgery, Head, Pancreatic Cancer Study Group, Disease Focused Care Management Expert Team for Pancreatic Cancer, chairman of the Executive Committee for Operations Improvement Implementation (GI Surgery), Massachusetts General Hospital and director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Gastrointestinal Cancer Center.

Dr. Warsaw is a member of the Massachusetts Medical Society, American College of

Surgeons, chairman, Membership Committee, Halsted Society, president of the New England Surgical Society (1993-1994); co-president-elect, Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract (1996); president elect, International Association of Pancreatology (1996).

Dr. Warshaw has authored and co-authored many peer reviewed articles and books. Many of the doctor's articles have been published in leading medical books and journals.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to share with my colleagues and the country the record of this excellent organization and the biographies of the two men they so justly honor.

HONORING CPL. HECTOR A.
SOMOZA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Corp. Hector A. Somoza, a U.S. Marine, who proudly serves and defends this great Nation. Following his family's distinguished patriotism, Corp. Hector A. Somoza has served in a honorable manner with the U.S. Marine Corps for 3 years, and most recently as a maintenance management clerk at the basic school, Quantico, VA.

Cpl. Hector A. Somoza, son of Jose D. Somoza a former sergeant in the armed forces of El Salvador, was born on July 25, 1974, in San Miguel, El Salvador. He immigrated into the United States in 1992 and attended Wakefield High School in Arlington, VA. In 1994 after graduating from high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. Upon his graduation from recruit training, at Parris Island SC, and after completing Marine combat training in the school of infantry, North Carolina, he was assigned to the 12th Marines. Third Marine Division, Okinawa, Japan as a basic electrician. During his tour in Okinawa he participated in the exercise, "Fire Dragon '95," which took place in Mount Fuji, mainland Japan. Next he was assigned to the Marine Corps Combat Development Command, Quantico.

After completing his third year of service in the military's most elite branch of service, and on behalf of a grateful Nation, we take this opportunity to award Cpl. Hector A. Somoza with the good conduct medal. It is an honor to pay tribute to a young man who continues to serve this Nation with distinction.

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF THE
HONORABLE RALPH W.
YARBOROUGH OF TEXAS

HON. HENRY B. GONZALEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, the recently concluded regular session of the 75th Texas Legislature adopted, and the Governor then signed, House Concurrent Resolution No. 318, in memory of the Honorable Ralph W.

Yarborough, who represented the great State of Texas in the U.S. Senate from April 1957, when he was elected to fill an unexpired term, until he departed elective office in January of 1971.

I am the only remaining member of the Texas delegation who had the privilege of serving with the late Senator Yarborough in the U.S. Congress, an honor which I had for more than 9 full years.

As the dean of my State's delegation, and as one who deeply admired and respected the Honorable Ralph W. Yarborough, I would like to take the opportunity to pay tribute to this champion of the common citizen and outstanding public servant by having placed in the RECORD the full text of the Texas Legislature's House Concurrent Resolution No. 318, which is here attached:

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 318

Whereas, the passing of the Honorable Ralph Webster Yarborough on January 27, 1996, at the age of 92, brought a great loss to the family and many friends of this distinguished native Texan and former member of the United States Senate; and

Whereas, he was born in 1903 in Chandler and attended Sam Houston State College and the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York; after teaching school for three years, he enrolled in The University of Texas School of Law, graduating from that institution with honors in 1927; and

Whereas, a specialist in land law, he went on to become an assistant attorney general and, in a landmark case, helped to secure for the State's permanent school fund the interest money on nearly 4,000,000 acres of land; he was a respected jurist as well and served as a district judge in Austin before becoming a presiding judge over 30 counties in Central Texas; and

Whereas, like many of his generation, Senator Yarborough proudly served his country during World War II as a member of the United States Army, and he rose through the ranks of the military to become a lieutenant colonel; after the war ended, he was named military governor of Japan's Honshu Province, and his valor and meritorious service throughout his military career earned him both the Bronze Star and the Battle Star; and

Whereas, in addition to his remarkable contributions in these areas, Senator Yarborough will be well remembered for his outstanding career in the United States Senate; he first won election to that office in April of 1957 and went on to serve his State, and nation with the utmost integrity and distinction for 13 years; and

Whereas, Senator Yarborough was inspired by the goals advocated in President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930's and 1940's; he truly envisioned himself as the people's servant and was dedicated to restoring fairness, justice, and economic opportunity for all Americans; indeed, shortly before the November 22, 1963, assassination in Dallas, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy said of the prolific federal legislator: "Ralph Yarborough speaks for Texas in the United States Senate, and he also speaks for our nation, and he speaks for progress for our people;" and

Whereas, a staunch advocate of equal rights, he earned further distinction as the only Southern senator to vote for the Civil Rights Act of 1964; he chaired the Labor and Public Welfare Committee and sponsored or actively supported nearly every piece of leg-

islation in President Lyndon Johnson's Great Society programs of the 1960's; and

Whereas, Senator Yarborough's experience as a teacher fostered his abiding commitment to public education; he was instrumental in the creation of the country's first Bilingual Education Act, and as the sponsor of a Cold War GI Bill, he helped to extend education benefits to 5,000,000 veterans; and

Whereas, this illustrious statesman further enhanced the quality of life of his fellow citizens through his work on health care and social security legislation, and his involvement extended to the area of natural resources as well, for he helped to preserve the beauty of the South Texas coast by authoring legislation establishing the Padre Island National Seashore and many other national parks and preserves in the state; and

Whereas, firmly believing that every human being is best viewed as an asset, rather than as a liability, this renowned lawmaker's philosophy was quaintly summarized by his frequently-expressed hope that "... the jam be kept on the lower shelf so the little people can reach it..."; and

Whereas, Ralph Yarborough further contributed to the political culture of our country by inspiring those who have followed in his footsteps, and he has left behind a legacy of outstanding achievements that will endure in the hearts and minds of future generations for many years to come; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the 75th Legislature of the State of Texas, Regular Session, 1997, hereby honor the memory of former United States Senator Ralph Webster Yarborough and extend sincere sympathy to the members of his family: to his beloved wife, Opal Warren Yarborough; to his brother, Donald V. Yarborough; to his sisters, Nell Yarborough Mallet and Margaret Yarborough Pickett; to his three grandchildren; and to the many other friends and relatives of this eminent public official; and, be it further

Resolved, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for the members of his family and that when the Texas House of Representatives and Senate adjourn this day, they do so in memory of the Honorable Ralph Webster Yarborough.

HONORING COUNCILMAN ENOCH H.
WILLIAMS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the work and achievements of Councilman Enoch Williams.

While attending the needs of a racially and ethnically diverse constituency, Mr. Williams has been a member of the New York City Council, representing the 41st Councilmanic District, since 1978. Prior to entering elective office, Mr. Williams served as the executive director of the Housing Development Corporation of the Council of Churches of New York City. He was also a community-organization specialist in the now-famous Youth-in-Action, Inc. anti-poverty agency, where he developed the skill of working with community groups, guiding them to create housing and employment in the innercity.

While making important strides in his role as a councilman, Enoch has managed to contribute to his community in other meaningful

ways. Currently, he is the civilian director of the New York City region of the Selective Service System. He is a member of the American Institute of Housing Consultants, the Community Service Society, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the National Urban League, and the Unity Democratic Club. In addition, the councilman served as an elected delegate to the 1992 Democratic National Convention, having served in the same capacity in 1968 and 1972. He also served as Democratic district leader from 1986 to 1994.

As a veteran, Major General Williams has again proven his commitment to his country. He was appointed Commander of the New York Guard in 1990. After serving as an enlisted member during World War II, General Williams earned his commission in 1950, and has enjoyed over 30 years of active service. His military decorations include the Legion of Merit, Army Commendation Medal, both the Bronze and Silver, and Silver Selective Service System Meritorious Service Medals. He retired in June 1995 as Commander of the New York Guard, with the rank of major general.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Councilman Enoch Williams for all of his years of faithful service to his country and to the 41st Councilmanic District of Brooklyn, New York.

NATIONAL ELECTION FAIRNESS ACT

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, without question, a fundamental necessity of our republican form of government is the participation of citizens in the electoral process. Today, across America, millions of voters will go to the polls and select their Representatives in Congress, the Governor's mansion, or their city council. These choices are extremely important and should enjoy the benefit of the collective wisdom of all citizens.

Can you imagine if you were a voter today in Alexandria, VA, and, before you could reach your polling place, the media begins to report that, based on results in Richmond, Norfolk, Roanoke, and other areas, the Governor's race was over? Obviously, this might discourage you from making any extra effort in casting your vote. Although this is a preposterous example for Virginia or other individual States, this is exactly what happens every 4 years during most Presidential elections.

It is demoralizing to be a voter on the West Coast on the way to the polls and hear on the car radio that the Presidential election is over—without your vote. In America's West, reports of results from the East is one significant factor in depressing voter turnout in Presidential elections. Certainly, Congress cannot restrict the freedom of the press to report factual information. However, we can take steps to delay the release of election results until after they would impact voters in States where polls are still open.

Today I am introducing the National Election Fairness Act, which will restrict State and local

election officials from releasing Presidential election results until after all polls have closed in the continental United States. This bill will not restrict the ability of news organizations to conduct exit polling or employ other methods to predict election outcomes, but will merely prevent official Presidential election results from being announced before western polling places have closed.

I believe this limited measure will help to increase voter turnout in Presidential elections in my home State of California and in other States in the Central, Mountain, and Pacific time zones. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting this bill and taking steps to ensure a more equitable election process that values the votes of a voter in California or Washington as much as a voter in Florida or New York.

REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP OP- POSES HEALTH REFORM—WORKS WITH FOR-PROFIT INSURERS TO DESTROY CONSUMER PROTEC- TIONS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, following is a memo from a staffer at the for-profit insurance lobby demonstrating how the Republican leadership is soliciting money to defeat consumer protections designed to provide a minimal floor of quality and protection for America's families.

Once again, those who profit off of insuring only those who are healthy and who resist any effort to provide minimal consumer protections reveal their cynical hand. Undoubtedly we will be flooded with literature in the coming months trashing proposals to require insurers to comply with simple rules against gagging what doctors can tell their patients and others, minimal consumer protections.

HEALTH INSURANCE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA MEMO

Date: October 22, 1997.

To: Michael Fortier.

From: Melody Harned.

Subject: Government Run Healthcare.

The message we are getting from House and Senate Leadership is that we are in a war and need to start fighting like we're in a war.

Republican Leadership is now engaged on this issue and is issuing strong directives to all players in the insurance and employer community to get activated. Earlier this week, I met with Keith Hennessey (Sen. Lott) along with the NFIB coalition. Hennessey will be working with House and Senate leadership to coordinate the advocacy effort. Senator Lott is well aware of the issue of mandates, incremental health care reform, etc., and is very concerned. Lott told Senator Jeffords that he could not introduce his "Quality Bill" this session and was advised to work less with Sen. Kennedy and more with his fellow Republicans on the Senate Labor Committee. Sen. Lott has also spoken with all Republicans on the Senate Labor Committee and told them to get involved and express their concerns. Sen. Lott also said that Senate Republicans need a lot of help from their friends on the outside,

"Get off your butts, get off your wallets". Keith Hennessey believes that it is critical that employer/insurer grassroots occur during recess (Nov & Dec) so that Members are prepared when they come back to town in January.

At the NFIB Coalition meeting today, Mark Isokowitz (NFIB) informed the group that he had been summoned to the Hill by Missy Jenkins (Rep. Gingrich), Dean Clancy (Rep. Army), Stacey Hughes (Sen. Nickles) and Keith Hennessey (Sen. Lott). Staff gave him four directives to take back to the coalition: (1.) Hold a briefing for Republican health LAs in 2 weeks; (2.) Implement heavy grassroots during recess; (3.) Meet with groups of Senators (e.g., Sen. Coverdell health care coalition) to report on what each organization is doing to fight these bills; and (4.) Write the definitive piece of paper trashing all these bills. Mark Isokowitz's overall impression from the meeting was that the Leadership was looking for signs of serious commitment on our part before they go out on a limb.

HONORING UNIVERSOUL CIRCUS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Universoul Circus as they bring their successful tour of the United States to the Power Center in Houston, in my district. Their production has entertained families across the country and is benefiting communities economically as well.

The Universoul Circus is the first touring African-American circus in the United States in more than 100 years. It follows in the footsteps of Ephraim Williams, who in 1885 began the first all-African-American traveling show. What began with a horse doing math tricks quickly grew into three touring circuses, leading Williams to be called the Black P.T. Barnum. With the creation of the Universoul Circus, Cedric Walker has built on that tradition and brought it to a new generation.

Since its humble beginning in 1994, in a rented tent in a parking lot in Atlanta, Universoul has grown in attendance and significance. Today, it performs to sold-out crowds across the country and has become a source of family entertainment and community pride that will last for decades to come. Mr. Walker is committed to bringing the circus to neighborhoods that have been traditionally underserved by the entertainment industry. The group bypasses suburban arenas for our Nation's poorer neighborhood, bringing over 100 jobs with it at each stop along its tour. By the end of their 18-city tour, the Universoul Circus will have given back more than \$5 million to the communities they have visited.

Like other circuses, the Universoul Circus showcases attractions from aerial and equestrian acts to wild animals and clown skits. Universoul, however, is much, much more than an ordinary circus. It spotlights the largest number of African-American performers in circus history and features urban themes, state-of-the-art lighting, and high-energy music under its big top. Performers pay tribute to such heroes as the renowned Buffalo Soldier

cavalrymen, the Negro League ballplayers, and the famed Tuskegee Airmen. For many of these performers, these acts are the first opportunity they have had to showcase their tremendous talents. Through their performances, they are honoring the struggles of the past while working to build a better future for our communities.

The Universoul Circus was developed to provide quality entertainment to all families, but also to give children examples of positive African-American role models. Walker and his performers include lessons in African-American history at each performance and encourage children to take the ringmaster's pledge to love their families and say no to drugs. Instead of avoiding difficult subjects such as slavery, stereotypes, and racism, the Universoul Circus uses these tragedies as tools, to show that, through strength of mind and spirit, we can overcome all obstacles.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate the Universoul Circus for its success both in providing exciting, wholesome entertainment for our families and strong role models for our children.

As a counselor at Blueberry Day Care Center and an educational assistant for the board of education and the Madison Day Care Center, Ms. Phanelson has provided a great service to our community and I would like to extend my thanks for all of her efforts. Also, she has been a long-standing charter member of the East New York Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.; a member of good standing at Holy Sacred Baptist Church; and a worker at the Rosetta Gaston Democratic Club in Brooklyn. It is people like Ms. Phanelson, and thousands like her, that allow communities such as East New York to thrive and grow.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to be able to pay tribute to Ms. Vera Phanelson. Although it pained me to hear that she will be moving out of my district to Maryland, I am sure, through her work in the district, she has sown the seeds for others in our community to follow in her footsteps and provide the needed services for those who live there.

TRIBUTE TO "WE WANT AMERICA BACK" RALLY

HON. ROBERT B. ADERHOLT

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Pastor Billy Robinson and everyone involved with the "We Want America Back" rally on October 23, 1997. Over 700 people were there to stand up for the traditional values that made this country great. It is important to note that the mayor of Jasper, Don Goetz, remarked that it was the biggest crowd ever at the Sherer auditorium.

It is also noteworthy that this was not a political rally, or a denominational rally. It was an opportunity for people to stand up for what is right. In fact, it was the many people from different denominations and both political parties joining together that made this rally so successful.

Although I could not attend in person due to my official duties in Washington, I strongly support the efforts of those I represent to improve the moral climate in this country today, and reassert the vital importance of traditional values. I look forward to continuing to work in support of this cause.

TRIBUTE TO VERA PHANELSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Ms. Vera Phanelson, a tireless worker and member of my district. Because of her commitment to children with mental illnesses, Ms. Phanelson's career has centered on providing care and assistance to the children who are working to overcome the challenges of these illnesses.

A POINT-OF-LIGHT FOR ALL AMERICANS: THELMA MARTIN

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute an individual who is a tireless advocate for her community—Mrs. Thelma Martin. At every critical juncture, she amasses the resources and summons the courage to challenge wrongdoings and embellish the lives of countless children, families, and citizens. She embarks on civic and community endeavors with the same fervor in which she attacks political and social ills. Upon any evaluation of her contributions, it is difficult to determine where her civic and professional responsibilities begin and end. Thelma Martin is a great POINT-OF-LIGHT whose work must be celebrated.

As a native New Yorker, Mrs. Martin's professional life has always been consumed by a relentless devotion to community. Currently, she is the executive director of the Renaissance Development Corp. In this capacity, Thelma Martin's accomplishments include development of various successful national-, state-, and local-sponsored programs including the Youth Development Delinquency and Recreation program, Commercial Revitalization program, Community Achievement project, Work Incentive program, and the Structured Educational Support program. Moreover, she is responsible for developing the first youth conference. Mrs. Martin also focuses her organization's endeavors on parental involvement projects, cultural trips, and practical workshops.

Thelma Martin's present record of public service is rivaled only by her past appointments. She has served as the executive director of the South Brooklyn Community Corp. Under her administration, Mrs. Martin sponsored and organized the First Annual South Brooklyn Summer Festival for area merchants

and residents—now known as the "Atlantic Antic". She also supervised 19 delegate agencies and 254 employees and had the largest number of area residents enrolled in college out of the 26 other area poverty agencies.

Despite her professional demands, Mrs. Martin still finds time to excel in civic duties. She has served as the superintendent of the Cuyler Warren Street Church Sunday School, member of Community Board No. 16, member of the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce, member of the New York State Association of Renewal and Housing Officials, member of the 76th Precinct Council, vice president of the New York City Association of Executive Directors, chairperson of the board of directors of the Jules Michael Day Care Center, council president of the Cuyler Warren Methodist Church and chairperson of the Pastor Public Relations Committee.

Unsurprisingly, Thelma Martin's work has not gone unacknowledged; she is the recipient of more than two dozen awards and commendations from many public officials and organizations. Among her honors are congressional awards from the 12th Congressional District and a senatorial award; an award from the New York State Democratic Party for her duties of community services; and awards from the Youth Committee Board No. 16, Ladies of Planning Board No. 16, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church. She was also recognized for helping to enrich the lives of more than 5 million children and their families.

A strong sense of family is another characteristic of Thelma Martin's life. She has been married to Woodrow Martin for 38 years and has two sons, Glen David and Mark Anthony; one grandson, Glen, Jr.; and one daughter-in-law, Ingrid.

Inarguably, Thelma Martin has conducted herself as a model citizen. She has accepted the rights, duties, and responsibilities of a democratic society with deliberation, fortitude, and compassion. She has chosen to exercise her inner power to the fullest possible extent, having utilized her actions to improve the lives of individuals, enhance her community, challenge institutions, and demand reform of adverse practices. She is a great POINT-OF-LIGHT for all of the people of America to appreciate and admire.

HMO DRUG RESTRICTIONS: LOOK OUT PATIENTS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, following is an article from the October 16, 1997, Dallas Morning News regarding the Harris Methodist Health Plan's financial incentives restricting what doctors prescribe for their patients.

I'm glad I'm not in that plan—and if I were in it, I'd sure get out if I could. The plan's financial incentives on doctors not to prescribe violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the Medicare law limiting the type and amount of financial incentive that a plan can place on a doctor to withhold care.

This Texas example is a classic of why we need managed care consumer protection reforms—ASAP.

[From the Dallas Morning News, Oct. 16, 1997]

HMO FINES ANGERING PHYSICIANS; STATE REGULATORS EXAMINE HARRIS PRESCRIPTION POLICY

(By Charles Ornstein)

A growing number of Fort Worth- and Arlington-area doctors are accusing Harris Methodist Health Plan of penalizing them for writing too many prescriptions, and the controversy is drawing the attention of state insurance regulators.

The doctors say the health maintenance organization has fined them thousands of dollars this year because they exceeded a predetermined pharmacy budget, which is included in their contracts with Harris.

They contend that the company's policy, enforced for the first time this year, places the financial bottom line above the patients' best interest.

"My concern is that one day, I or another physician may withhold some care for financial reasons," said Dr. J. Mike White, a family practitioner in Joshua, south of Fort Worth, who had to repay Harris \$28,000 this year. "That's inappropriate and that's unethical."

Harris officials defended their system Wednesday but said they will increase the allowable pharmacy expenses next year in response to the doctors' concerns. The officials said the network's 6,600 physicians should work harder to cut their costs.

"I think we are in a situation where we are not doing things as efficiently as possible and we need to change our practice patterns," said Dr. Ramiro Cavazos, chairman of Harris Methodist Select, the network's exclusive physician group. "The problem is that we have a premium, and we have to live within that premium."

The Texas Department of Insurance said Wednesday that it has begun a review of Harris' incentive policies. Spokesman Jim Davis said he does not know how long the review will last but said it comes after a physician complained to the state.

"Whenever questions are raised about the operations of HMOs or insurance companies in Texas, it's our job to look into the situation," Mr. Davis said. "This is nothing really special."

The Texas Medical Association board has said that it has serious concerns about the effect of the prescription limits on patient care.

"Our concern is that the financial incentives and disincentives appear to be really too severe in the sense of encouraging doctors to provide necessary care," said Rocky Wilcox, general counsel of the state medical group.

"Nobody has really looked to see whether these patients were provided with unnecessary medication or whether they really needed it."

Last week, the 18-doctor Fort Worth Clinic joined a lawsuit against Harris that was filed in August by physician Richard Hubner. Dr. Hubner, who practices in Springtown, in Parker County, settled his claims against Harris last month after officials agreed to stop penalizing him for writing too many prescriptions.

The clinic's court petition alleges that the health network provides an incentive for doctors to deny care and reject sick patients, which would be a violation of state law.

"I don't think that you would want your doctor to think about whether it would cost him money personally if he prescribes medicine that you need," said David Humphrey, the clinic's administrator. "We think it's

wrong, and we've been advised that it's illegal."

Under Harris' contracts with its physicians, the company pays doctors a set monthly fee to provide all necessary care to each Harris HMO patient. That fee, which is a percentage of each member's premium, ranges from \$11.87 to \$15.19 per month.

In addition, doctors are entitled to spend 9.6 percent of each premium dollar on prescriptions. If they exceed that budget, the contract requires them to pay Harris 35 percent of the additional cost. If they spend less than the budget allowed, they receive a bonus.

Harris has awarded \$338,000 in bonuses during the last quarter, Dr. Cavazos said. He didn't disclose the amount of fines assessed to doctors.

According to a confidential memo obtained by The Dallas Morning News, Harris doctors exceeded their pharmacy budget by more than 26 percent last year. Internists, who generally treat sicker patient, surpassed their budget by 46 percent, the memo says.

"I've been amazed at the number of people who have been suffering and paying this in silence," said Robin Weinman, executive director of the Tarrant County Medical Society. "I don't know how they're surviving, quite frankly."

Internist Karen Spetman said she was billed \$10,000 by Harris in July for exceeding her pharmacy budget during the first six months of the year. That accounts for about 15 percent of the fees she has received from Harris, she said.

"Nobody works for free," she said. "But right now, that is what I'm doing. I'm not even working for free—I'm working for a negative number. I am paying money for the privilege of practicing medicine."

Dr. Spetman, the only Harris internist in the Fort Worth suburb of Willow Park, said she has met repeatedly with Harris representatives to explain her problems. When she reviewed her patient charts and prescriptions with a Harris pharmacy director, she was told that she was making the correct medical decisions, she said.

Harris officials did not contest Dr. Spetman's claims. But they said doctors in the system need to realize that increased efficiency and short-term sacrifices will eventually lead to long-term savings.

"When you get a bill, you're hopping mad," said Harris spokeswoman Lisa O'Steen. "But if you look at it in the long term, because Harris has such a high retention of patients and doctors, this is a savings you see over a long period of time."

TRIBUTE TO SPECIAL AGENT VITO S. DeMARCO

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Ms. DeLAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Special Agent Vito S. DeMarco of the U.S. Treasury Department, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, on the occasion of his retirement. After 30 years of diligent service in law enforcement, Special Agent DeMarco has built a distinguished reputation of protecting the United States and her citizens.

Special Agent DeMarco began his career with the Office of Naval Intelligence in 1967,

after graduating from Fairfield University in Fairfield, CT. After his assignment to the Naval Investigative Service in New York City, Special Agent DeMarco spent the last 28 years of his tenure with the Boston Field Division of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

During his tenure with BATF, Special Agent DeMarco distinguished himself by serving on several task forces, including the Sky Marshall Program during the 1970's. He has made his expertise available to the U.S. Secret Service, serving on protection details during the Presidential campaigns of Presidents Ford, Carter, Bush, and Clinton. In addition, he has contributed to the protection details of several foreign heads of state and conducted investigations into illicit firearms trafficking and numerous explosives and arson cases.

Special Agent DeMarco also served with distinction in the U.S. Navy Reserves, from which he retired in 1996 with the rank of commander. His 33 years of naval service included his activation for the Persian Gulf War, in which he commanded a special security division.

Special Agent DeMarco also demonstrated his steadfast commitment to his country and community by volunteering to work with the Marine Cadets of America. Mr. DeMarco has given a great deal of his time and energy to this organization, and has served on the board of its national office.

Law enforcement personnel serve our country by putting their lives on the line, ensuring the safety of our citizens. We owe them all a great debt of gratitude, so it is with the deepest appreciation and pride that I salute Special Agent DeMarco today.

U.S. EXTENDS ITS LEADING EFFORT TO REMOVE WORLD'S LAND MINES

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member commends to his colleagues the editorial which appeared in the Omaha World-Herald on November 4, 1997.

U.S. EXTENDS ITS LEADING EFFORT TO REMOVE WORLD'S LAND MINES

The U.S. government has made a considerable effort to prevent people around the world from being killed or injured by anti-personnel mines. To the credit of the Clinton administration, the United States is about to do more.

President Clinton has announced a U.S.-led campaign to rid the world of the devices in the next dozen years. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said the United States will contribute \$80 million this year to an international effort to clean up minefields, double the U.S. contribution the previous year.

Some people might think a contradiction exists. The U.S. government is the major holdout from a proposed treaty banning mines. Clinton has said that the United States won't sign unless the treaty is amended to allow continued use of the devices along the U.S.-guarded demilitarized zone

separating North and South Korea. A committee that won the Nobel Peace Prize for pushing for a global anti-mine treaty has treated the Clinton policy—and the president himself—with scorn and contempt.

The biggest problem with land mines has its roots in the past, however, not in the future behavior of the United States. An estimated 100 million of the explosive devices remain in the ground in more than 60 countries, from Bosnia to Angola and from El Salvador to Cambodia. Many of the mines were planted in haste by guerrilla forces—people who neither sign global treaties nor leave any record of where they lay their mines.

About 26,000 people are killed or injured by the devices every year, many of them children at play. This is the problem that the plan announced by Clinton and Ms. Albright is designed to solve by 2010.

American forces have already drastically curtailed their use of land mines. Part of the reason is that U.S. mines caused many U.S. casualties. The mines still in use are mostly manufactured to lose their explosive force after a few weeks. The locations are carefully recorded. The mines are removed when no longer needed.

As to U.S. reservations about the treaty: The situation on the Korean peninsula has few parallels anywhere in the world. A superpower that has been entrusted by peace-loving nations—and is expected by them—to prevent war in Korea is hardly going to add to the unmapped minefields that are causing the 26,000 casualties a year. The United States isn't out of line with its request to continue using land mines in Korea if it signs the treaty.

Indeed, treaties don't bind guerrilla forces. They are often ignored by aggressors. A land mine treaty, even if signed by the United States, would guarantee little in the long run.

On the other hand, an international clean-up of minefields could do a lot to reduce mine-related casualties. The campaign to find mined areas and remove the explosives safely is a noble humanitarian effort. U.S. participation is well worthwhile.

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE HEALTH CENTER PROGRAMS

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 29, 1997

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from Illinois, Congressman DANNY K. DAVIS, for sponsoring this special order this evening. I am very pleased to join him in this discussion on an issue of great importance to the Congress and this Nation—community health centers.

The recently enacted Balanced Budget Act of 1997 will make nearly \$13 billion in Medicaid cuts from fiscal year 1998 through fiscal year 2002. This will severely impact the way in which health care is financed and delivered across the Nation. The numbers of uninsured Americans and the cost of health care services are continuing to rise. Yet, the availability of financial resources to address these concerns is diminishing. Thus, we must carefully consider community health centers as a model

of community-directed health care for our changing health care system.

Community health centers are unique public/private partnerships which were created to provide increased access to health care services for the Nation's poor and underserved. Located in isolated rural and inner city areas, with few or no physicians, that suffer with high levels of poverty, infant mortality, elderly and poor health, they hold the distinction of being locally-owned and operated by the very communities that they serve.

Our health care system relies heavily on charitable care to meet the growing health needs of the Nation's 37 million uninsured—as well as the million individuals with insufficient coverage. Community health centers provide invaluable health care services to more than 10 million of the Nation's most vulnerable and underserved individuals. These patients include minorities, women of childbearing age, infants, persons infected with HIV, substance abusers and/or the homeless and their families. In fact, according to the Bureau of Primary Health Care, of the 33 million patient encounters at community health centers in 1996, 65 percent of the persons served were African-American and other minorities, 85 percent were poor, and 41 percent were uninsured.

Community health centers are the true safety-net providers of this Nation. As such, they obligated to provide health care services to all patients without regard to their ability to pay. Patients are billed for health services on a sliding fee scale in order to ensure that neither income nor lack of insurance serves as a barrier to care. And, Federal grants received by the centers are used to subsidize the cost of health care that is provided to uninsured patients as well as those services which are not covered by Medicare, Medicaid, or private insurance.

Community health care centers also provide high quality cost-effective care. In fact, studies show that the average total health care costs to patients are 40 percent lower than for other providers that serve the same population. Significant savings are also achieved by reducing the need for hospital admissions and emergency care.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, as a health advocate, and as chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust, I am concerned about the toll that the changing health care market is taking on many families across this Nation. Congress must recognize that community health centers play a critical role in filling health care service gaps. Therefore, I join my colleague, Congressman DAVIS, in urging our colleagues to ensure that this unique provider of health care services is preserved and strengthened to accommodate the growing health needs of the most vulnerable among us, the poor and the underserved.

CBO ANALYSIS OF KYL-ARCHER AMENDMENT: BAD NEWS FOR SENIORS AND DISABLED

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, last week, the Congressional Budget Office made public its analysis of the budget impact of the Kyl-Archer amendment which will make it much easier for doctors to charge Medicare beneficiaries anything they want, anytime they want.

The Kyl-Archer amendment effectively ends Medicare insurance. There is no insurance if you never know whether the doctor is going to reject your Medicare card and ask you to pay the whole bill out of your pocket.

CBO describes a scary Halloween trick for the Nation's seniors and disabled. Doctors will be able to hold sick patients hostage for higher payments, fraud will increase, total national health care spending—already by far the highest in the world—will increase. It will be a treat for doctors, but the end of insurance peace of mind for seniors.

The full CBO letter analysis follows:

U.S. CONGRESS,

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,

Washington, DC, October 30, 1997.

HON. BILL ARCHER,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: At your request, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has reviewed H.R. 2497, the Medicare Beneficiary Freedom to Contract Act of 1997, as introduced on September 18, 1997. (S. 1194, an identical bill, was introduced in the Senate on the same day.)

Direct contracting allows beneficiaries to make financial arrangements with health providers outside of the established Medicare payment rules. The direct contracting provision in current Medicare law, enacted in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (P.L. 105-33), requires providers contracting directly with patients to forgo any Medicare reimbursement for two years. Under that condition, CBO expects that direct contracting will almost never be used.

H.R. 2497 would eliminate the two-year exclusion period, allowing health providers to contract directly with their Medicare patients on a claim-by-claim basis. For example, a physician could bill Medicare for an office visit while directly contracting with the patient for an associated test or procedure.

Enactment of H.R. 2497 would affect Medicare outlays. Because of uncertainties about the number of claims that would be separately contracted and about the effectiveness of the regulatory oversight of those contracts by the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA), however, CBO cannot estimate either the magnitude or the direction of the change in Medicare outlays that would ensue.

With Medicare's restrictions on balance billing—which limit the amount beneficiaries must pay for services covered by Medicare—providers may in some cases receive lower payments than what their patients would have been willing to pay out of pocket. The bill would allow physicians and other health care providers to increase their incomes by negotiating direct contracts that

included prices in excess of Medicare's fees, effectively bypassing the limits on balance billing. For some services, CBO believes that such contracting would not be very widespread because few beneficiaries would be willing to pay the entire fee (not just the difference between the provider's charge and what Medicare would have paid). For other services—such as those where the need for timely medical treatment might increase patients' willingness to pay—direct contracting could become much more common.

If direct contracting continued to be rarely used, there would be no changes in benefit payments, no additional difficulties in combating fraud and abuse, and no major new administrative burdens placed on HCFA.

If direct contracting were extensively used, however, Medicare claims could be significantly reduced. At the same time, HCFA's efforts to screen inappropriate or fraudulent claims could be significantly compromised because it would be difficult to evaluate episodes of care with gaps where services were directly contracted. Furthermore, HCFA would be unlikely to devote significant administrative resources to the regulation of direct contracting. HCFA's efforts to administer other areas of Medicare law, including many of the new payment systems envisioned in the Balanced Budget Act, will continue to strain the agency's resources. Without adequate regulatory oversight, unethical providers could bill Medicare while also collecting from directly-contracted patients.

Although the impact of H.R. 2497 on the federal budget is uncertain, the bill would almost certainly raise national health spending. Even if direct contracts were rarely used, payments made under those contracts would probably be higher than what Medicare would have paid, and Medicare's efforts to combat fraud and abuse would probably be hampered to some extent.

If you have any questions about this analysis, we will be pleased to answer them. The CBO staff contact is Jeff Lemieux.

Sincerely,

JUNE E. O'NEILL,
Director.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, we are starting another week of legislative session, possibly the last week this year, and still no campaign finance reform. The news over the weekend was encouraging for supporters of reform. Speaker GINGRICH announced that the House will schedule debate on campaign finance reform no later than March 6 next year.

This is another positive step on the road to reform, but it is not the answer. As I and many of my colleagues have warned, a vote next year, during an election year, is not satisfactory. By March of next year we will all be involved in our reelection campaigns, and any change will be too late to take effect in the 1998 elections. Mr. Speaker, rather than wait until March of next year to consider this issue, the House should take up campaign finance reform this week. There are a wide variety of bills currently introduced that could be considered. The House Committee on Government

Reform and Oversight has been holding hearings on these bills. We have the time to consider campaign reform legislation this week and have a bill passed before we adjourn for the year.

The voters of this Nation want us to clean up our house. The leadership in the Senate and the House have agreed to allow a vote on this issue. The time to act is now. I refuse to take "no" for an answer.

INTRODUCING THE HEALTH CARE ACCESS IMPROVEMENT ACT

HON. CAROLYN C. KILPATRICK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to proudly introduce the Health Care Access Improvement Act, legislation that will provide a \$1,000 per month tax credit over 5 years for primary health care providers who are located or will establish practices in health professional shortage areas. These urban and rural underserved areas are designated by the Health Resources and Services Administration [HRSA]. In our Nation, there are 2,686 primary medical care, 960 dental and 518 mental health areas that are underserved, according to the latest list of designated sites issued by the Department of Health and Human Services. This list was published in the Friday, May 30, 1997 edition of the Federal Register at page 29396. This information is also available via the Internet at <http://www.bphc.hrsa.dhhs.gov>. While we do not have a shortage of doctors in our country, Mr. Speaker, we do have a shortage of doctors who are either willing or can afford to locate in certain areas. I want to thank my colleagues, Representatives DANNY DAVIS of Illinois, DARLENE HOOLEY, JESSE L. JACKSON, JR., MIKE MCINTYRE, JUANITA MILLENDER-MCDONALD, RON PAUL, MAX SANDLIN, and EDOLPHUS TOWNS, who are original cosponsors of this bill and who recognize the need for Congress to provide an incentive for doctors to locate in these underserved areas.

In short, this bill will:

Provide current and future health care providers with a tax credit.—Those few doctors who are currently established in underserved areas, as well as those who relocate to these areas, would receive a tax credit of \$1,000 per month over 5 years. The Health Care Access Improvement Act would help current and future primary health care providers.

Help doctors establish long-term relationships with the community.—This tax credit provides a long-term solution by enabling doctors to establish health care practices in poor areas. Unlike Public Health Service doctors, who rotate through community facilities, private doctors invest their own time, energy and money to open a practice in a community. Such an investment means that these doctors become an integral part of the community, and highly unlikely to leave. The Health Care Access Improvement Act gives primary health care providers an incentive to stay in the community.

Expand access to health care to more people.—This tax credit would be the most cost-

effective way to establish health care practitioners in those areas where people do not have access to health care. More people would be able to go to their neighborhood doctors or dentist. The Health Care Access Improvement Act gives more urban and rural people choice in health care.

Preventive health care has been proven to save lives and money. The very first bill that I cosponsored as a Member of Congress related to improving health care, and I have sponsored several health care seminars and forums in the 15th Congressional District of Michigan. Access to more doctors will go a long way toward ensuring that all of our constituents have high quality health care. The Health Care Access Improvement Act is but a small step in the direction of health care equality and improved access for all. While no cost has been determined for this bill as of today's date, I will ensure that it will meet the requirements of offsetting cuts to provide for its implementation.

A TRIBUTE TO HER HONOR DEBORAH STEVENS MODICA

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Deborah Stevens Modica, who was sworn in as a judge on October 17, 1997. Mrs. Stevens Modica has represented the people as a prosecutor in the offices of the district attorney in New York for nearly 20 years, and, in light of the recent implementation of the death penalty in my State, has become the expert in New York and one of the top experts across the country on this issue.

A graduate of Fordham University and Fordham Law School, Mrs. Stevens Modica was admitted to the bar in 1978 and has since worked diligently to rise through the ranks in the district attorney's office. Starting in Queens, she moved from a researcher in appeals bureau to trial lawyer on the supreme court, major offense and homicide bureaus to chief of the appeals bureau from 1978 to 1989.

In 1990, she moved on to the district attorney's office of Kings County, where she started as the chief of the supreme court bureau. Her work there earned her a promotion to executive assistant district attorney in 1991. In 1995, she was promoted yet again to deputy district attorney. Her extensive knowledge of the justice legal system continued to grow, gradually catching the eye and gaining the respect of experts in the law profession across the country.

In addition to her mastery of law, she is a generous woman, devoting hours of time each month to the Adopt-A-School program which teaches fifth grade students how the legal system works. She was instrumental in successfully implementing this program in the schools in Brooklyn after a study proved that children 10 years old are at the most impressionable age in making decisions about the law.

Most amazingly, Mrs. Stevens Modica raised five daughters ranging in age 5 to 27.

Her perseverance in work, the community, and family has undoubtedly paid off, as evidenced by her appointment as judge to the criminal court in the city of New York. My warmest regards to Her Honor, Judge Deborah Stevens Modica.

CONCERN OVER THE FUTURE OF
COLORADO FORESTS

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues some thoughts expressed by Mr. Rob Nanfelt of Colorado. There is a growing concern over the future of our forests in Colorado. These are the views expressed by Mr. Nanfelt:

Our Colorado forests are in dismal shape. Scientists predict that a series of catastrophic wildfires will sweep through the state if something is not done. Dangerously high volumes of dead and decaying timber fuels have accumulated over the past 80 years and continued lack of action to deplete these fuels puts our families and homes at risk. As well as constituting a major threat

to standing structures, these fires will have a significantly adverse impact on air quality for many towns, especially those in eastern Colorado.

It has been reported in recent months that the U.S. Forest Service will be taking a more active role in attempting to prevent these fires by setting fires of their own. This process of setting controlled fires is known as "prescribed burning" and is used to eliminate the overstocking of forest fuels. Earlier this year, in an address at Boise State University, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt said that he would endorse an increase in the frequency of these planned burns. "Fight fire with fire," he said. In fact, the Forest Service wants up to \$50 million for the burning program in fiscal year 1998. The program would allow the Forest Service to set fire to nearly 1.5 million acres.

Prescribed burns are not an exact science. While there are certain benefits of a well-executed controlled burn, there are numerous risks. If not carried out precisely to plan, these fires can very easily spread out of control and cause property damage, less than desirable air quality, and in the most extreme cases, death.

Instead of focusing on such risky methods, the Forest Service should consider other forest restoration options such as mechanical removal. While those in the environmental community may cringe at such a thought, mechanical removal is a more precise tool

than prescribed burns. And in many cases, it can be every bit as environmentally friendly.

Sometimes the forest fuels have little or no commercial value. In these instances prescribed burns are probably prudent. However, the Forest Service should coordinate any of these planned burns with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This will ensure that local communities are protected against any punitive measures handed down by the EPA. The risk of non-attainment in these communities as a result of these fires is a real concern. State and local officials should also be included in the process.

Local economies, the Forest Service, and the forests would all benefit if the Forest Service focused on using mechanical removal as its primary option for forest restoration. Local timber companies would have more work to do and as a result more jobs would be available. The Forest Service could concentrate on other management goals and have a little extra money to achieve these goals. The forests would be healthier and the threat of catastrophic wildfire greatly reduced. The Forest Service should not once again bow to the wishes of the extremists in the environmental community, and should instead base its decision on the elements of sound science and economic benefit.

It is up to each of us to pay attention to the issues that face us and make the right decisions for our future.