

A TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL PARK
SERVICE RANGER JOSEPH
KOLODSKI

HON. CHARLES H. TAYLOR

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I was shocked and deeply saddened by the news last weekend of a federal law enforcement official's murder in my district. Ranger Joseph David Kolodski, 36, of the U.S. Park Service was killed in cold blood while serving our nation and keeping Western North Carolina communities safe. Unfortunately, legislative business will keep me from attending Thursday's memorial services, so I am sending members of my staff to convey our sympathies and promise that this senseless act will not go unpunished.

A six-year veteran of the Park Service, Ranger Kolodski epitomized the dedication and sacrifice that protect and maintain our nation's natural resources. He was a devoted father and family man. Joe was also a dedicated member of his community. He served in his community church, First Baptist Church in Bryson City, North Carolina. He also volunteered with the Cherokee Emergency Medical Services.

I plan to inquire of National Park Service officials what equipment upgrades or resources could prevent another tragedy from occurring. We need to guarantee that our National Parks and Forests remain safe for visitors and personnel. In the 82 years of the National Park Service, Ranger Kolodski is the third to fall in the line of duty. We need also to be sure the men and women who keep them safe have the tools they need to protect themselves!

Finally, my thoughts and prayers are with Florie—Ranger Kolodski's wife of 17 years who is also a Park Ranger—and Rachel, Joseph and Sarah—Joseph's children. For them, Ranger Kolodski was a devoted husband and father. At this time of grief, I urge Members to join with me in conveying our sympathies to this young family and work with me to see that our Park Rangers have the tools they need to be safe.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO THE
HURON PLAYHOUSE IN RECOGNITION OF ITS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to one of the truly outstanding landmarks in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District, the Huron Playhouse. On Opening Night, Tuesday, June 30, 1998, the Huron Playhouse will celebrate its Fiftieth Anniversary.

The Huron Playhouse is the oldest continuing educational summer theater in the state of Ohio. Over the past fifty years, the Huron Playhouse has been the summer home to more than 475,000 attendees, who have come to see 329 productions of some 262 different plays. The successes of the Huron Playhouse,

over its fifty-year history, are strong examples of what hard work, determination, talent, and creativity can bring.

The Huron Playhouse has a very rich and tradition-filled history. Started in 1948, the Huron Playhouse began as a partnership summer theater program by Bowling Green State University and the Huron community. Over the past fifty years, the BGSU/Huron partnership has continued to grow and has provided the tremendously educational and entertaining theatrical productions that are associated with the Huron Playhouse.

Mr. Speaker, the Huron Playhouse is one of the cornerstones of the Huron community. It continues to be a wonderful summer theater of which we can all be proud. The Fiftieth Anniversary Celebration of the Huron Playhouse is a time to reflect upon the achievements of the past, and a time to look to the future with much enthusiasm. I am sure the next fifty years of the Huron Playhouse will be just as memorable as the first.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge my colleagues to stand and join me in paying special tribute to the Huron Playhouse, to all those who have attended its performances, to the directors, producers, cast, crew, and orchestra members, and all others who have helped build it into the premier theater in the area. We congratulate you on fifty wonderful years, and wish you all the best in the future.

HONORING GENEVIEVE BROOKS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, we rise to speak in the highest praise of a woman who has worked for much of her life to improve the lot of people in need, a woman who has done more than probably anyone to save and create housing in the Bronx when it seemed that everyone else was fleeing.

Genevieve Brooks is vice president for the Faith Center for Community Development, where she is dedicating herself to creating and preserving healthy neighborhoods. She has been doing this in many guises for most of her life. As Deputy Borough President of the Bronx she oversaw policy implementation for a county of 1.2 million people while managing the day-to-day operations of 120 people and agency professionals, as well as community based organizations, in planning for and improving housing and the delivery of municipal services. She has served on the Boards of Directors of Bronx Health and Human Services Development Corp. and the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp. She has also served on the Consumer Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Board and the Advisory Council of the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp.

She has organized and run dozens of organizations to improve housing either communally or throughout the Borough. She was instrumental in the Bronx being named one of America's top ten cities.

Genevieve Brooks is being honored for her good works by being named Bronx Woman of Distinction. No one is more deserving of this honor; no one has done more to earn it.

PROTEST ON BEHALF OF
ALEXANDR NIKITIN

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, next week, on Thursday, June 25, human rights activists and defenders of the environment plan to gather in front of the Russian Consulate in San Francisco to protest the continuing mistreatment of former Russian Navy Captain Alexandr Nikitin.

Working with the Norwegian environmental group "Bellona," Mr. Nikitin provided resource material for a report entitled "The Russian Northern Fleet: sources of Radioactive Contamination," that exposed the Russian Navy's nuclear waste dumping in the White Sea and Kola Peninsula region. The report revealed, for instance, that fifty-two decommissioned nuclear submarines still containing nuclear fuel are rusting at the Murmansk dockside and that nuclear reactors from other decommissioned submarines were simply dumped into the Arctic Ocean.

It would probably be too much to ask that the Russian government thank him for his efforts. Frankly, the Russian government is not the only government that has not looked kindly on environmental whistle blowers. However, most governments would not go to the lengths to which the Russian government has gone to punish Mr. Nikitin for his expose.

On February 2, 1996, he was arrested and charged with "revealing state secrets," a charge that could carry the death penalty if he were convicted. In October 1996, the Federal Security Service (FSB) declared the Bellona/Nikitin report "forbidden literature." Nikitin was held in pretrial detention from February to December 1996. I would note that during this time his brother-in-law, who had served in the Russian Northern Fleet, died of radiation poisoning.

Protests from human rights activists and defenders of the environment resulted in Nikitin's release from detention, but the charges were not dropped. The FSB attempted to have him indicted on the basis of unpublished "secret decrees," a blatant violation of the Russian constitution. Even the Federal Prosecutor's office admitted that "mistakes were made" and that the case "contains no hint of espionage." The FSB had to back down, and after six earlier investigations, now claims to have a legitimate case to go to trial. One wonders how many chances the FSB gets.

Meanwhile, Nikitin has been required to remain in St. Petersburg. His wife and daughter came to the United States last year to accept on his behalf the prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize for his environmental work. Their apartment is kept under surveillance, the phone has been tapped, and Nikitin's lawyer was recently approached by thugs on the street and told to "stay away from this."

But the FSB has misjudged their man. Alexandr Nikitin and his family are standing up to the reactionary forces of the past. They do this not only for themselves, but for millions of Russians and millions of others on this planet who are endangered by ecological irresponsibility and indifference. If we care about human rights and the future of our planet, we should add our voices in support of Alexandr Nikitin's cause. The Russian government

would be better served by honoring the efforts and integrity of citizens such as Alexandr Nikitin rather than trying to silence and punish him.

GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS EDUCATION ACT OF 1998

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, today I will introduce the Gifted and Talented Students Education Act of 1998 that would provide block grants to states to identify and assist our nation's most gifted and talented students.

Gifted and talented students are this nation's greatest natural resource. They are our future Thomas Edisons, Langston Hughes, George Gershwin and Albert Einsteins. Unfortunately, these students are not being challenged today and our nation is missing out on their future achievements. According to Secretary of Education Richard Riley, our nation is facing a "quiet crisis" in that we are not appropriately educating our nation's most gifted and talented students. We must challenge these students with exceptional talent so they do not slip through the cracks and their talent does not go untapped.

My legislation addresses this "quiet crisis" by providing block grants to state education agencies to identify gifted and talented students from all economic, ethnic and racial backgrounds—including students of limited English proficiency and students with disabilities—and to provide support programs and services to ensure these students achieve their full potential. Funding would be based on each state's student population, with each state receiving a minimum of \$1 million per year.

I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in my commitment to ensure our nation's gifted and talented students reach their fullest potential and to ensure we have a new generation of Americans ready to meet the demand of the 21st Century.

POLYCYSTIC KIDNEY DISEASE

HON. MERRILL COOK

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. COOK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues the story of a remarkable woman from Salt Lake City. Her story, and that of her family, brought home to me the reality of a tragic and widespread affliction called Polycystic Kidney Disease, or PKD.

Heidi Naylor suffers from PKD. So did her grandfather. So does her mother. So does her aunt. So do two of her brothers and sisters. Her children may ultimately develop this devastating disease as well.

Heidi's grandfather died from PKD when he was only 43 years old. Heidi's mother has undergone surgery six times in a single month to

treat the disease. She has had 38 surgeries overall and has been on dialysis for the last 15 years. Heidi's mother has suffered from numerous life threatening complications including punctured lungs, pancreatitis, and numerous infections. However, the nurses and technicians at her dialysis center call her the "Energizer Bunny," because she never gives up. She has survived longer than almost anyone else in Utah on dialysis. Heidi told me that her mother is an inspiration to her entire family because, "when you see her and her determination to live here on this earth you can't help but feel uplifted."

Heidi herself is 33 years old with three children, and has also been diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease, which is also known as PKD. Taking a cue from her indefatigable mother, she is fighting to make a difference. Heidi has become involved with Polycystic Kidney Research Foundation. She came here to Washington last week, which is when I had the pleasure of meeting her. Heidi called herself a rookie advocate, but she was extremely articulate in relating her family's compelling story, and in advocating a greater federal commitment to PKD research. Heidi says that she wants to work to ensure that effective treatments are available if her children in case they develop PKD.

Six hundred thousand Americans suffer from PKD. As Heidi's story makes clear, it is a genetic disease. It is also very painful and debilitating. Sufferers are afflicted with cysts on both kidneys which impair their functions. More than half of those afflicted develop kidney failure. In fact, PKD is the third leading cause of kidney failure. PKD sufferers make up approximately 10% of the End Stage Renal Disease population in the U.S. Medicare and Medicaid End Stage Renal Disease coverage for PKD sufferers costs the government over one billion dollars annually.

Congress can help people like Heidi and her family in their fight against the pain and the debilitating symptoms and complications of PKD.

First, we can fight for increasing funding for the NIH. I understand that the Appropriations Committee is in the process of considering a \$1.25 billion increase in NIH funding. Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this needed spending increase.

Second, we should let the NIH know that it should increase the funding for PKD research through the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. NIH funding for this disease is low compared to the large number of individuals who are afflicted. Increased funding for PKD research would be a wise and compassionate investment. Scientists have recently discovered the gene that causes most cases of PKD and are working on finding ways to translate this discovery into treatments for the disease. Finally, as I have already noted, PKD costs the government over a billion dollars a year in Medicare and Medicaid coverage for End Stage Renal Disease. Effective treatments will eliminate the need for this spending.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to consider that a relatively small investment in research at the NIH can end a great deal of pain and suffering, and ultimately save the Treasury billions of dollars. It will also help Heidi Naylor and her family. It will let them

know that we in the Congress are standing beside them in their fight against PKD. And that is the least we can do.

CONCERNS FOR THE ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 24, 1998

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, two days ago the full House passed the FY 1999 Energy and Water Development Appropriations Bill. I was proud to lend my support to that bill, although there are several important issues affecting my District that I would like to bring to the attention of my House colleagues.

I represent the workers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant—one of two plants in America that originally enriched uranium for our country's nuclear weapons production program. Today, that uranium is sold to commercial nuclear power companies.

The environmental cleanup associated with the enrichment process is financed by the Decontamination and Decommissioning Fund. The President requested \$277 million for the D&D fund. The Senate bill includes \$197 million while the House bill provides \$225 million.

The federal government is responsible for this cleanup, Mr. Speaker, and further delays will result in higher long-term costs. It is my hope that the House and Senate conferees will agree to fund the D&D program at the higher House-approved funding level.

Another issue of special importance to me was raised by my colleague in the Senate, MITCH MCCONNELL, during a floor discussion with Senator PETE DOMENICI, Chairman of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee.

The United States Enrichment Corporation (USEC) currently manages the two uranium enrichment plants in Paducah, Kentucky and Portsmouth, Ohio. Legislation has already passed the Congress to privatize USEC and final privatization action is imminent. Once that Corporation is privatized, I have been advised that between 600 to 1,700 jobs will be lost at the two plants.

I have also been told that USEC has accrued approximately \$400 million on its books for the purpose of cleaning up the uranium waste generated by the enrichment process since USEC took over operation of the plants from the Department of Energy in 1993. However, this money only remains available until USEC is privatized and, at that point, the monies would be transferred to the Treasury.

I oppose returning those funds to the Treasury when they were originally earmarked for cleanup of USEC's uranium waste at both of the gaseous diffusion plants.

It would be my hope that my colleagues on the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Subcommittee will work with me to ensure that the money earmarked for the purpose of cleaning up the uranium tails produced by USEC will continue to be dedicated for these purposes and help mitigate job losses at these plants.