

health care facilities and the state lacks the power to delve into these cases. The result is a high number of cases falling through the cracks.

My bill would authorize the states and the Medicaid Fraud Control Units to investigate these patient abuse cases in long-term care facilities.

The government should be doing more—much more—to combat fraud and abuse. “White collar” crimes in the health care industry can be stopped. The Senior Citizens Protection Act requires coordination of anti-fraud efforts, keeps our senior citizens safe, returns all recoveries to the federal government, and does not cost the federal government anything!

Our government should be given all the tools necessary to combat fraud in our health care system and give Americans the peace of mind that their moms and dads are well cared for in their retirement years. We need to ferret out providers who rip off the system, and Americans need to rest comfortably at night knowing our family members and friends receive the highest quality health care without the fear of being physically, mentally, or financially abused. I urge my colleagues to support the Senior Citizens Protection Act of 1998 because it will provide health care security to our seniors and restore their trust in the people who care for them from morning until night.

#### A TRIBUTE TO ROY LAURENCE

### HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Senior Citizen of my district, Mr. Roy Laurence.

Roy Laurence, of Indian Head Park, Illinois, has displayed tremendous effort and involvement toward the betterment of many of the members of his community. In the opinion of this Congressman, he has indubitably merited the award of Senior Citizen of the Year.

In recent years he has been extremely involved with many not-for-profit organizations within the third district of Illinois. His activities have included the position of commander of the Robert E. Coulter Jr. Post, American Legion.

In 1996 I worked cooperatively with Mr. Laurence in planning and executing the Jubilee Medal awards program for the veterans of the June 4, 1944, Normandy Invasion. This opportunity allowed me to personally witness the heart and soul that Mr. Laurence has given to each and every one of his involvements.

Mr. Laurence has also expressed a sincere concern for the development of the youth of America. He has chaired committees for both the Boys State Program and the Lincoln's Challenge Program. During his chairmanship for the Boys State Program he personally sought outside funding in order that as many young men as possible receive assistance with their educational development. The Lincoln's Challenge Program, a Defense Department initiative designed to keep youth's in school, has made significant strides and continued to inspire educational development, in large part, due to the resilient involvement of Mr. Laurence.

I hope you will join with me in recognizing this devoted senior's hard work and effort toward his community as a whole.

#### TRIBUTE TO ELVERA BERGEN

### HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to pay tribute here in the U.S. House of Representatives to a very special person who will be honored this week in my home district in New Jersey, Sister Elvera (Vera) Bergen.

Sister Bergen has served as the organist for Ebenezer A.M.E. Church in Rahway for over 37 years, performing a true “labor of love” as she has shared her wonderful oratory and musical talents to enrich the spiritual lives of countless members of the community. A member of the First Baptist Church of Cranford, New Jersey and an affiliated member of Ebenezer A.M.E., she is widely admired and appreciated for her devotion to the church and its members. It is fitting that we recognize the accomplishments of this caring and generous woman who has meant so much to us in New Jersey.

I am sure that my colleagues here in Congress join me in congratulating Sister Bergen as she is honored on June 27th, and in wishing her many more productive and fulfilling years.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

### HON. ASA HUTCHINSON

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, during Roll Call Vote #265, agreeing to H. Res. 484, providing for the consideration of H.R. 4103, making appropriations for the Department of Defense for FY 1999, I was unavoidably detained. Had I been present, I would have voted “aye.”

#### HONORING BRYAN BARDIN OF ST. PETERSBURG, FL FOR HIS AWARD WINNING TRIBUTE TO HIS GRANDMOTHER

### HON. C.W. BILL YOUNG

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, during the observance of “Older Americans Month,” the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council's Area Agency on Aging, in cooperation with the Pinellas County School Board, sponsored an essay contest in which young students were asked to write about their favorite older person.

Bryan Bardin, an 11-year-old student at Bay Vista Fundamental School in St. Petersburg, Florida, was awarded first place for his essay honoring his grandmother, Mary Aucremann. This outstanding essay was published in The

St. Petersburg Times and I would like to share it with my colleagues today. Not only do I commend Bryan for his writing, but I also thank his grandmother for being such a great inspiration to her grandson and to each of us who learn of her good works through his words.

#### BRYAN BARDIN, 11, FIRST PLACE

It's almost as hard to find a Good Samaritan as it is to find a needle in a haystack. By definition, Good Samaritans are ready to give a helping hand, do for others before doing for themselves and set a good example. I think my grandma is a true Good Samaritan. She is always giving of her time and energy, she sets a good example all the time, and she has the biggest and kindest heart of anyone I know.

My grandma Mary Aucremann (Granny) is a very busy person. If you were to graph how she spends her time using a pie chart, you would find there is only a small slice left for herself. She takes Meals on Wheels dinners to people she doesn't even know. She volunteers some of her time at Cedarkirk, our church camp, repairing anything that needs to be fixed. Some of her time goes to her friends who need her to help them with their errands or problems.

A large slice of her time is used helping us, her family, with our projects, problems and periodic puppy demands. For example, we went to Michigan last year, and Granny was able to pet-sit our three hamsters and our dog. She had to take our dog, Zoe, and three times a day and feed her once a day. She also had to feed and clean all of the hamsters. This sounds easy, but it rained 90 percent of the time. Zoe got as dirty as a pig that had rolled in the mud. So Granny had to give her a bath. Even though all this happened, I think she will do it again this year.

I look up to many people, but Mom says Granny is the best role model for anyone. Like the Boy Scout oath, which says, “To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake and morally straight,” Granny exercises regularly to keep “physically strong.” When she turned 60, she went back to school to learn accounting so she could do the taxes of her children and anyone else who needs help. This keeps her “mentally awake.” Granny is a Christian and lives by the Bible to keep herself “morally straight.” My grandma loves to keep busy by square- and line-dancing. I love her and I love being with her.

Granny has the absolute biggest heart I've ever seen. I think her heart is what holds the family together. She's always there for me and probably everyone else in the world! She loves everything and everyone she comes across. Once, Granny, my mom and I went to Sam's for some food; Granny saw a calendar full of cute puppy pictures and cried over it.

She also comes to all of our school, Scouts and other events. For example, she and my grandfather, Poppo, came to look at my science fair open house, my music concert and my spaghetti dinner. They also came to the Great American Teach-In.

Very recently, Granny had open-heart surgery. We all missed her turkey for Thanksgiving, even though my mom's turkey wasn't that bad. I still don't understand why the doctor had to fix Granny's heart; it seemed fine to me.

I love my Grandma, my true Good Samaritan, good role model, always giving, big-hearted, kind and loving grandmother. Even if her heart was broke one time, it was, is and will always be perfect to me.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MILITARY  
RETIREE HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT  
1998

**HON. HENRY BONILLA**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. BONILLA. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing along with my colleague from Washington State, Mr. Dicks the "Military Retiree Health Fairness Act of 1998". This bipartisan bill is an important step in keeping our promises to military retirees. Specifically, this legislation will make sure that all military retirees have the opportunity to participate in Tricare Senior Prime, by waiving penalties for late enrollment in Medicare Part B. Without such relief those most dependant on the military medical system may well see their access reduced.

Medicare Subvention will allow military retirees to receive the health care they were promised by having Medicare reimburse DOD for care provided to Medicare eligible beneficiaries at DOD facilities. Retirees will be able to continue using the same physicians they have always relied and depended upon. Current law mandates that retirees who had counted on using the military health care system and did not enroll in Medicare Part B will be denied the opportunity to participate. Without change, these individuals would have reduced access to DOD health services due to Tricare Senior Prime participants increased use of the system.

The "Military Retiree Health Fairness Act of 1998" makes sure all military retirees have the opportunity to participate in Tricare Senior Prime. The "Military Retiree Health Fairness Act of 1998" waives the penalties for those who do not have Medicare Part B, but would like to participate in Tricare Senior Prime. We can not allow our military retirees to be neglected. I urge my colleagues to join me and cosponsor this worthy legislation.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4149 "THE  
FOREST SERVICE COST REDUC-  
TION AND FISCAL ACCOUNTABIL-  
ITY ACT OF 1998"

**HON. ROBERT SMITH**

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, a year-and-a-half ago the Committee on Agriculture convened a hearing in Sunriver, Oregon to discuss deteriorating conditions in the Eastside forests of Oregon. That meeting marked the beginning of what has since become an intensive national inquiry into the way the Forest Service is managing our National Forest System.

Since the meeting in Sunriver, the Committee on Agriculture has held ten hearings to examine the performance of the Forest Service. From the first six of these the Committee learned that forest health and productivity throughout the country is deteriorating due to a decline in active forest management—management that is necessary to provide high quality recreation experiences, maintain a well-functioning rural transportation system,

sustain the integrity of watersheds, improve fish and wildlife habitat, protect timber stands from the devastating effects of unnatural fire, insect and disease activity, and provide an adequate supply of forest products to the American public. Recreationists, wildlife advocacy groups, environmentalists and forest products companies from every quarter have testified that the agency is achieving fewer outputs per dollar spend now than in any other time in its history.

This information has prompted the Committee to take a more detailed look at how the Forest Service manages its annual appropriations, trust funds and off-budget accounts to determine the correlation between fiscal management and resource management. This inquiry has revealed some rather troubling findings, including the following:

In 1995, the USDA Inspector General gave the Forest Service a failing grade on its annual financial report saying that it could not certify that the data contained in the report was accurate. The Forest Service has failed to produce an acceptable financial statement since then.

A total of at least 10 separate General Accounting Office reports have been published in recent years documenting the mismanagement of taxpayer dollars by the Forest Service.

The Forest Service claims to have a \$10.5 billion road reconstruction backlog. Yet, thirty-two percent of the agency's road construction and reconstruction program costs are overhead. The FY99 budget request asked for \$26.5 million for road reconstruction while requesting \$31 million for overhead.

The Forest Service presently charges over 27% overhead to the off-budget accounts it uses for reforestation, brush disposal, and other site restoration associated with federal timber sales. Overhead charged to these funds has increased by 80% over the last five years.

Presently 31% of the total costs of the federal timber sale program is overhead. These costs are in addition to the cost of project planning and implementation, environmental documentation, litigation, and other costs. By way of comparison, in 1996 the Forest Service reports that it spent \$5 million on timber sales litigation, \$54 million on environmental documentation, \$123 million on timber sales preparation and over \$200 million on overhead.

The Forest Service does not currently have a system in place to adequately track the costs associated with the programs it administers. Consequently, inefficiency and escalating overhead is the rule within the agency rather than the exception.

Inevitably, each dollar spent on overhead or lost to inefficiency is a dollar not spent on active forest management. In short, rather than spending more money to deliver quality goods and services to the American taxpayer, the Forest Service is spending more money to support wasteful management and line the pockets of bureaucrats.

Some in Congress argue incorrectly that the solution to the problems I have outlined is to simply eliminate those programs the agency does not efficiently administer. This is the position, for example, of those who advocate eliminating the federal timber program.

This approach, however, ignores rather than solves the problem and is ultimately unfair to national forest constituents. If Congress were

to eliminate every Forest Service program plagued by waste and inefficiency then, in the end, we would be forced to eliminate all of them. The big losers under this way of thinking are the millions of tax paying Americans who use our forests for a variety of purposes every day.

When government misbehaves, Congress' objective should be to discipline the government, not punish the people it is supposed to serve. That is why I have introduced the Forest Service Cost Reduction and Fiscal Accountability Act of 1998.

This legislation will require the agency to reduce costs, limit overhead, and be more accountable to Congress and the taxpayer. Specifically, the bill will do five things:

1. Require the Forest Service to account annually for the costs associated with all of the programs it administers by moving to an "all resources" financial reporting system.

2. Impose limitations on the overhead the agency may charge to off-budget funds.

3. Require the Forest Service to fully disclose in each year's budget request the amount of overhead implicit in each budget line item.

4. Require the Forest Service, in cooperation with the General Accounting Office and USDA Office of Inspector General, to develop a five-year strategic plan for identifying and reducing overhead and unnecessary costs.

5. Require periodic GAO audits of the implementation of the strategic plan and corresponding reports to Congress.

I invite my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in quickly moving this bill toward final passage on the House floor.

The Forest Service Cost Reduction and Fiscal Accountability Act of 1998 will produce less waste, greater efficiency, and make more dollars available for active on-the-ground management. It is a good government solution for what ails the Forest Service without unfairly penalizing forest constituents. In sum, it is a win for the good forest management, a win for the Forest Service and, most importantly, a win for the millions of Americans who live, work and recreate in our national forests every day.

INTRODUCTION OF THE MINORITY  
COMMUNITY TOBACCO REDUC-  
TION ACT

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, June 25, 1998*

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today more than fifty Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific Caucus, Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Native American Caucus joined with a number of other Members of Congress in introducing legislation to address the disproportionate levels of tobacco use and tobacco related disease in the minority community.

The "Minority Community Tobacco Reduction Act" was developed to address the absence of minority initiatives in national tobacco legislation and to reverse the disturbing effects of the tobacco industry's targeting of minorities. The three main priorities of the bill are: 1. Funding for tobacco-related prevention activities in the minority community; 2. Research on