

Joseph has served twenty years with the USPS. Within three years of his induction to the USPS, he was promoted to a supervisory position. Joseph has held numerous positions in customer services, including Delivery and Collection Supervisor; General Supervisor of City Delivery; Station Manager; Manager of Delivery and Collection; Manager of Stations and Branches; Area Manager; Postmaster of Far Rockaway; Senior Manager of Post Office Operations in Westchester, New York; and various details at USPS Headquarters and in the New York area.

A product of Brooklyn, New York, Joseph grew up in the New Lots neighborhood of Brooklyn. He attended Public School 171, Thomas Edison High School, and graduated from St. Johns University.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I pay tribute to Joseph Lubrano for his commitment and dedication to ensuring quality service to the people of Brooklyn from the United States Postal Service.

HELP EXPAND INSURANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO DEFEND OUR NATION

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I have introduced the Veterans' Life Insurance Opportunity Act of 1998 (H.R. 4115) to increase the accessibility of the Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI) program to men and women of our Armed Forces following their separation from active duty.

Active duty service members, unless they decline coverage, automatically participate in the Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) program. This coverage expires following their discharge from the Armed Forces.

Under current law, veterans have only four months to convert directly from SGLI to the VGLI program. Then they have an additional 12 months to apply for VGLI if they can provide medical proof of insurability. Following this brief time period, veterans have no other opportunities to enroll in VGLI.

How many veterans, who are in transition from military to civilian life, busy relocating themselves and their families, finding housing, returning to school, and working hard to enter and advance themselves in the civilian workforce, are also thinking of life insurance needs? Many are young and have not yet thought of their future beyond the military. The deadlines for conversion are missed because of the many more immediate issues that newly-separated veterans are facing.

Then, a couple of years go by, and the veteran realizes the importance of life insurance. By that time, it is too late!

My bill, the Veterans' Life Insurance Opportunity Act, provides a reasonable and more realistic level of flexibility for our veterans who want coverage under the VA life insurance program. It would allow two years following their date of discharge to convert from SGLI to VGLI. Additionally, a second opportunity to make the conversion would be provided five years after their date of discharge from military service.

Who, in our country, deserves and needs life insurance more than anyone else? This may be a hard question to answer, and indeed, our answers may vary. But high on the list, I believe, must be our veterans.

I urge my colleagues to expand insurance opportunities for veterans. Please support and co-sponsor H.R. 4115.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BIOMASS ENERGY EQUITY ACT OF 1998

HON. WALLY HERGER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, today I join with my colleague Mr. MATSUI and our cosponsors—Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. MCCREY, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mrs. THURMAN, Mr. SMITH of Oregon, Mr. POMBO, Mr. HUNTER, Mr. DOOLEY, Mr. GIBBONS, and Mr. BLUMENAUER—to announce the introduction of "The Biomass Energy Equity Act of 1998," legislation that will help sustain the economic and environmental benefits provided to the public by the biomass power industry in the United States.

The biomass power industry is a unique source of renewable electricity. It generates electricity by combusting wood waste and other non-hazardous, organic materials under environmentally-controlled conditions as an alternative to disposal or open-incineration of these materials. In effect, the biomass power industry makes constructive use of waste materials that would otherwise become a public liability.

Mr. Speaker, the organic materials used as fuel by this industry are gathered from the agricultural and forest-related sectors of our economy and from our urban waste streams. In addition to the jobs that are generated by this activity, a range of quantifiable benefits arise: the risk and severity of forest fires is diminished, air pollution from open burning of agricultural residues is avoided, and landfill space is preserved. In the absence of this \$7 billion per year industry, the nation would face a series of negative consequences above and beyond the loss of the renewable electricity itself.

Congress recognized the importance of the biomass power industry when it enacted a biomass energy production tax credit in 1992. Unfortunately, the production tax credit provided by this code section—due for expiration within a year—has never been accessible to the biomass power industry due to excessively narrow drafting. Our legislation corrects this defect in order to recognize and retain the public benefits, including the national security and system reliability benefits, of this important industry.

Mr. Speaker, I truly believe that this is a "good government" issue whose clear merits and environmental benefits transcend partisan and regional politics, and I would urge all of my colleagues—on both sides of the aisle—to cosponsor this important and much-needed legislation.

CIGARS ARE NO SAFE ALTERNATIVE ACT OF 1998

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Cigars Are No Safe Alternative Act of 1998.

Mr. Speaker, available scientific evidence demonstrates that regular cigar smoking causes a variety of cancers including cancers of the lip, tongue, mouth, throat, esophagus, larynx, and lung. That same evidence demonstrates that heavy cigar smokers and those who inhale deeply are at increased risk of coronary heart disease and can develop chronic lung disease. Despite these serious and deadly health risks, cigar use is up dramatically in the United States over the last five years: small cigar consumption has increased by an estimated 13%, large cigars by 70%, and premium cigars by a whopping 250%. Teenagers are a fast-growing market for these deadly tobacco products. In fact, data from the Centers for Disease Control's 1997 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicate that among high school students, over 30 percent of the males and 10 percent of the females are current cigar smokers.

Mr. Speaker, cigars are not a safe alternative to cigarettes. Compared to a cigarette, nicotine yields for cigars are 9 to 12 times greater; tar yields 2 to 3 times greater; and large cigars emit 20 times more ammonia, and up to 10 times as much other cancer causing agents.

In order to drive home the message that smoking cigars is not a safe alternative to smoking cigarettes, I am introducing the Cigars Are No Safe Alternative Act of 1998. The CANSA Act will prohibit the sale and distribution of cigars to any individual who is under the age of 18. It will directly impose restrictions on the sale and advertising of cigars directed at youth, and eliminate cigar advertising on electronic media. It will encourage cigar manufacturers to end the practice of paying for, or participating in cigar product placements in movies and on television where a substantial segment of the viewing audience is under the age of 18. And it will direct the FDA to require warning labels on cigars to warn cigar users about the health risks presented by cigars.

Mr. Speaker, the CANSA Act will also require the Secretary of Health and Human Services to conduct a study on the health effects of occasional cigar smoking, nicotine dependence among cigar smokers, biological uptake of carcinogenic constituents of cigars, and environmental cigar smoke exposure. It will require the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to report to Congress on the sales, marketing, and advertising practices associated with cigars. And in addition, the Secretary, acting in cooperation with the FDA, the FTC, and the Department of Treasury, shall be required to monitor trends in youth access to, and use of, cigars and notify Congress of the results.

Mr. Speaker, if and when Congress does act to reduce teen smoking, we must send the unambiguous message to children and adolescents that cigars are no safe alternative to

cigarettes. I urge all members to become co-sponsors of the Cigars Are No Safe Alternative (CANSAs) Act of 1998, and to support its passage in the House.

COMMENDING LOCAL UNION 101

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Local Union 101 of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry in Belleville, Illinois on the 100th anniversary of its charter.

Local 101 has been serving the needs of the plumbing and pipe-fitting industry for 100 years. It is made up of plumbers, pipe-fitters, steam-fitters, service-fitters and gas-fitters. These men and women work hard, and they have made a significant difference in the community. In part due to the dedication of the members of Local 101, the Belleville community has one of the highest standards of living in the Metro-East. Local 101 has helped complete the two hospitals in Belleville, the area high school and many other building and infrastructure projects in the community. All projects were completed with the highest quality craftsmanship. Mr. Speaker, Southwestern Illinois is growing rapidly. MidAmerica Airport, MetroLink Light Rail and other economic development projects give the region even more potential for growth and prosperity. Local 101 will continue to play a significant role in the development of the region.

Local 101 was one of the first unions in the area. When Local 101 was chartered on August 17, 1898 it had 23 members. Today it numbers over 200. Local 101 has been instrumental in securing pay equity for its members, health insurance, a 40-hour work week, its own pension plan and a continuous training program. 100 years ago these innovations were unheard of. Today, because of the work of unions such as Local 101, the hardworking men and women in the plumbing and pipe-fitting industry are afforded safe workplaces, equitable pay and worker protections.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Local 101 on its fine history of quality workmanship and its laudable record of promoting workers rights. I congratulate Local 101 on its first 100 years and wish Local 101 and its members well in the years to come.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SMALL WATERSHED REHABILITATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

HON. FRANK D. LUCAS

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. LUCAS of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the "Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments of 1998". This bill will address the serious infrastructure needs of our nation's aging community sponsored—USDA assisted dams.

"The Small Watershed Amendments of 1998" provides a responsible legislative proposal aimed at addressing the infrastructure needs of our aging watershed dams. It defines

the problems, calls for an assessment of the problem, creates a cost-share program to address the need, and authorizes funding of the program.

During the week of July 4th, 1998, a celebration in Cordell, a small farming community in Western Oklahoma, marked the 50th anniversary of America's first United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) floodwater retarding structure. Constructed in 1948, the Cloud Creek Watershed Site #1 was built under the authorization of the Flood Control Act of 1944 (P.L. 534). This authorization was a result of a belief in Congress that rural watershed protection, flood protection, proper land management, and keeping raindrops close to where they fall was best addressed through technical assistance available through the USDA. Works under P.L. 534 were authorized in 11 major watersheds throughout the country. The success of P.L. 534 spawned the enactment of the Pilot Watershed Program in 1953 and the Watershed Protection and Floodwater Protection Act of 1954 (P.L. 566). P.L. 566 is commonly referred to as the USDA Small Watershed Program. Over 10,000 flood retarding structures have been built across the nation under these combined programs.

The Small Watershed Program is one of our nation's most successful public/private partnerships. In all instances, the USDA served as a partner with states and local entities by encouraging sponsorship of sites, providing cost-share funding for construction, doing site and geologic surveys, and providing engineering and design expertise. The local district provided all the land, easements and right of ways, covered local construction costs, managed the contracting process, and continue to operate and maintain completed works.

The Cloud Creek celebration serves as a reminder to all of us that over 1,000 of the structures built under these programs are now over 40 years old. Most of the structural measures built have an evaluated life of fifty years or have been swallowed up by urban development. It is time to address the rehabilitation needs of these aging structures.

Every state in the Union will eventually be impacted by this problem. I would encourage my colleagues to review the legislation, and I look forward to their support.

THE PASSING OF LEOPOLD LEFKOWITZ

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 5, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to inform our colleagues of the passing of an outstanding, remarkable constituent of my 20th Congressional District of New York, who happened also to be a unique American who in many ways personified the American dream.

Leopold Lefkowitz, known and beloved by his followers as Reb Leibish, was 79 years young when he died this past weekend, but many lifetimes were crammed into his busy, productive life.

He was born in Europe at a time when that continent was just beginning to deal with the devastation of World War One. His family worked diligently to overcome economic hard-

ship, but their labors resulted only in the hard heel of oppression when the Nazis came to power and began their relentless persecution of Jews and other minorities. Leibish Lefkowitz was fortunate enough to escape during World War Two, and he settled with the Hasidic community in Brooklyn, NY.

In those years, Reb Leibish enjoyed great success with a glass company he founded, the Crystal Clear Importing Inc., which was headquartered in Ridgefield, NJ. He and his wife, Dinah, raised two children. As Reb Leibish became more and more prominent in charitable and philanthropic enterprises, Dinah became known as a dynamic industry leader, guiding Crystal Clear Importing to phenomenal growth.

In the early 1970's, when the need to establish a new Hasidic home in upstate New York became apparent, it was Reb Leibish, Leopold Lefkowitz, who founded the Monfield Homes Company which purchased 172 acres in the Town of Monroe. It was his dream that the Hasidic community moving to this new homestead—the Village of Kiryas Joel—would come to live in peace and harmony with their neighbors. This was a goal he worked for from that time until the day of his death.

During the first twenty years of Kiryas Joel's existence, Reb Leibish Lefkowitz served as his community's elected Mayor. In that capacity, he was not only the temporal leader of the Hasidic village, he was also the strong right arm of its religious leaders.

Leibish was president of Brooklyn's Congregation Yetev Lev and the United Talmudical Academy, to which he donated substantial funds over the years. He was well known for his compassion and his charity in helping many people in need throughout the years.

The number of charitable and community service causes in which Leibish Lefkowitz immersed himself is truly awesome. Still legendary is the tale of how he put together a coalition of environmentalists, religious and ethnic leaders, families, and other concerned citizens to successfully fight the construction of a garbage incinerator in the heart of the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn during the early days of Mayor Koch's administration. The incinerator would not only have been a threat to the cause of clean air and to the health of the neighborhood, it would have totally destroyed the cohesiveness of the various ethnic groups who have made that neighborhood famous. Leibish earned the respect not only of Mayor Koch but his entire administration for the masterly, gentlemanly way he revealed the folly of this incinerator plan.

On May 25, 1987, then-Governor Mario Cuomo of New York presented Mr. and Mrs. Lefkowitz with a citation on the occasion of their being feted at the annual Door of Hope Banquet of the Pesach Tikvah Hope Development Company. The Governor noted that: "Reb Leibish has been a recognized and respected leader of the Hasidic community. His numerous leadership positions and organizations include the Presidency of Congregation Yetev Lev D'Satmar and United Talmudical Academy, Founder and Mayor of the Village of Kiryas Joel, Chairman of the Board of United Jewish Organizations of Williamsburg, Founder and President of Opportunity Development Association, Founder and President of S.A.T.M.R. School for Special Children, along with contributions to uncounted charitable and educational institutions."