

project that will soon be underway by the Army Corps of Engineers.

I would like to thank the Army Corps of Engineers for their cooperation in bringing relief to the people of the 18th Congressional District in order to avoid dangerous flooding.

I am quite certain Mr. Speaker that this project would not have been able to go forward if this additional money would not have been granted by the conference committee.

For that I have to thank Chairman MCDADE, Ranking Member FAZIO, and my friends and colleagues, CHET EDWARDS and MIKE PARKER who sit on the Appropriations Committee.

This must be done and I will work with the Army Corps of Engineers and local officials to ensure that this is done. I urge my colleagues to vote 'yes' on this conference report.

TRIBUTE TO SOUTH FLORIDA FOOD RECOVERY—19 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE NEEDY

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on October 16, 1998, South Florida Food Recovery will observe the anniversary of its 19th year of feeding the poor, needy and homeless throughout Miami-Dade County and all of South Florida. It is fitting that this is also World Food Day.

By any standard, South Florida Food Recovery is a remarkable organization. Its founder, the Honorable Jule Littman, who has served the City of North Miami Beach with distinction in many official capacities, saw a need in our community and sought to fill it. His vision, energy, organizational ability and perseverance has led to an alliance with 359 charitable agencies throughout Florida, through which South Florida Food Recovery provides supplemental meals to over 700,000 people each month—more than 4,200 tons of food this year, at no cost whatsoever to the recipients.

During the week of October 12, in cooperation with 302 schools in Dade County, South Florida Food Recovery will be collecting canned food for distribution to the needy. It will also dedicate its first new freezer truck, which was purchased with funds provided by the State of Florida and the Southland Corporation, based in Dallas, Texas.

In addition, since nutrition and health are so closely related, South Florida Food Recovery will complete the distribution of 500,000 toothbrushes, dental floss and toothpaste to elementary school students in Dade County, at no cost to students.

Mr. Speaker, all of our colleagues can benefit from the example set by South Florida Food Recovery. I join with our entire community in congratulating Jule Littman and his entire staff and volunteers for a job well done.

TRIBUTE TO GEORGE JESKO, DEP- UTY SUPERINTENDENT OF THE LAMPHERE SCHOOLS

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Mr. George Jesko, Deputy Superintendent of the Lamphere Schools after 33 years of service in several positions in the school district.

George first came to Lamphere Schools as a young Science teacher who also coached basketball, track and football. As a result of his success in coaching, he was named Coach of the Year after only two years. This was followed by the same honor six additional times.

George was not only a teacher and coach but also Athletic Director, Assistant High School Principal, Associate Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent of Human Resources/Athletics.

In addition to his school positions, George has been an active leader in community organizations. He served as President of the Oakland Association of Personnel Administrators, Chairman of the Council of Chief Negotiators, and has been very involved in the American Association of Personal Administrators, Michigan Employer Labor Relations, the Metro Bureau and Michigan Negotiators Association.

The Lamphere Schools have indeed been fortunate to have had the services and talent of this outstanding and dedicated individual. I commend him for his commitment to the students in providing the best educational environment in both academics and athletics.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing George Jesko good health, success and happiness as he enters a new phase in his life.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, September 26, 1998

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give my support to protecting 100 percent of the Social Security Trust Fund, and not using any of the projected surplus for tax cuts at this time. For over sixty years, Social Security has stood as one of our Nation's greatest success stories, providing all Americans with a basic level of retirement security.

Social Security is a contract between the citizens of the U.S. and their government. The people in this country are entitled to know that in retirement they will have security, live in dignity, and be provided with health care. Today, two-thirds of retirees in this nation depend upon Social Security to provide over half of their annual income. Our constituents should know that we, as the leaders of this country, are looking out for not only their future, but the future of their children. A vital requirement for protecting that future is saving Social Security first. Our constituents should be able to trust that their contributions to the Social Security Trust Fund are being used as intended.

I am opposed to cutting Social Security in order to provide tax cuts to those with higher incomes. As lawmakers, we owe it to the country to provide for the long-term fiscal health of Social Security and other federal retirement programs, and to ensure that these programs are available to future generations of Americans without increasing the payroll tax.

Some have suggested we should enact a series of major tax cuts in anticipation of the projected budget surplus. What these individuals neglect to point out is that almost all of the money to pay for their tax cuts would be drawn out of the Social Security Trust Fund and other federal trust funds—trust funds that should be preserved for their intended uses. The best tax cut we can give to the American family is a truly balanced federal budget. A balanced budget will lead to lower interest rates and strong economic growth. I am firmly committed to a balanced budget—a budget that protects Social Security for future generations.

In closing, let me say that the question of how to approach any budget surplus is one of the most important issues facing this country. I believe we should resist calls to spend the projected surplus and consider our options very carefully. Balancing the federal budget and keeping it balanced should continue to be one of this country's top priorities, and you can be assured that I remain absolutely committed to accomplishing these goals. We owe it to our constituents, our children, and ourselves to save Social Security.

TAXPAYER RELIEF ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, September 26, 1998

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4578 (the "Protect Social Security" bill) and, by extension, its companion bill, H.R. 4579 (The Taxpayer Relief Act).

Current projections indicate there will be a substantial federal budget surplus over the next decade. According to the majority party, H.R. 4578 saves 90% of this projected surplus for Social Security, leaving the remaining 10% to finance the tax cuts in H.R. 4579—tax cuts worth \$80 billion over five years and \$177 billion over ten years. However, if one looks past the appealing rhetoric in support of H.R. 4578, it becomes evident that the bill is very irresponsible.

For example, even if the optimistic projections about the federal budget come true, the vastly greater portion—98%, to be more precise—of that surplus will be made up of the large yet temporary surplus in the Social Security Trust Fund. Indeed, if the Social Security surplus were excluded, there would be a \$137 billion deficit in the 1999–2003 budget period and only a \$31 billion surplus in the 1999–2008 budget period.

Given that the federal surplus in the 1999–2003 budget period will be entirely Social Security-based while the federal surplus in the 1999–2008 budget period will be almost entirely Social Security-based, it is evident that the 10% of the federal surplus that H.R. 4578 sets aside to finance the majority party's tax cuts represents a raid on Social Security.

H.R. 4578 is ill-advised and short-sighted, and I urge my colleagues to defeat it.

TRIBUTE TO MASTER SERGEANT
GARY A. JACOBSON

HON. JOE SCARBOROUGH

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a young man who has dedicated his career to protecting the people of this great nation and ensuring the American way of life. This gentleman has distinguished himself as a diplomatic leader, a dedicated family man, and a decorated soldier in the United States Army. The man I speak about today is Master Sergeant Gary A. Jacobson, Liaison NCO of V (US/GE) Corps to II (GE/US) Korps.

Master Sergeant Jacobson was recently awarded the Bronze Cross of Honor of the Bundeswehr for his outstanding performance and his great service to the Bundeswehr. He is deserving of that honor because of his positive attitude, honesty, and dedication that goes above and beyond the requirements of his duty as a US Liaison NCO.

Mr. Speaker, these accomplishments only begin to describe the caliber of a man like Master Sergeant Jacobson. Thomas Jefferson once said that the greatest honor of a man is in doing good to his fellow men. Gary Jacobson has certainly lived by that axiom. If you ask his colleagues to describe him, you would hear words like honest, loyal, dedicated, courageous, honorable, hard working, and a true gentleman.

Master Sergeant Jacobson's dedication to his country serves as a model in the lives of the hundreds of soldiers who have served with him. Gary Jacobson is truly an inspiration to the men and women in uniform from North-west Florida and around the world.

INTRODUCTION OF THE ASTHMA
ACT

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the ASTHMA Act—Action Strategies To Help Millions of Asthmatics—on behalf of myself and my colleague from Texas, JOE BARTON. This bipartisan legislation, which is the result of months of research and preparation, will provide our nation with new tools to battle the epidemic of asthma that continues to affect millions of Americans—especially our children.

Asthma affects more than 14 million Americans, including almost 5 million children. Every year, asthma results in 500,000 hospitalizations and claims 5,500 lives. Since 1980, reports of asthma are up more than 75 percent. Tragically, the asthma-related death rate among children has risen equally fast. Asthma remains one of the leading causes of absenteeism from school and costs our nation more than \$6 billion per year.

Mr. Speaker, public health experts do not have all of the answers, but they know plenty.

We now have the collective knowledge and experience to help millions of sufferers control and manage their asthma. We can reduce absenteeism in school and the workplace, reduce costly ER visits and hospitalizations, and help millions of Americans live happier, more productive lives.

Earlier this year, the Daily News published an award-winning series of articles highlighting the asthma problem in New York City. The ASTHMA Act would go a long way to addressing those problems. It would expand federal asthma data collection efforts; promote new health guidelines on asthma prevention and treatment; educate the public about the dangers of asthma—and how to manage it; and improve the response of local schools and state children's health programs.

Our legislation is supported by organizations leading the battle against asthma, such as the American Lung Association, the Joint Council of Asthma, Allergy, and Immunology, Mothers of Asthmatics, as well as pharmaceutical manufacturers and managed care plans.

Mr. Speaker, asthma is not a partisan problem. It affects Texans and New Yorkers, Republicans and Democrats, men and women, and our children. As a nation we can and should be doing much better. I invite my colleagues to join Congressman BARTON and me in our effort to help asthmatics lead healthier, happier, more productive lives.

DEATH OF MURIEL HUMPHREY
BROWN

HON. BILL LUTHER

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. LUTHER. Mr. Speaker, Muriel Humphrey Brown's contributions to the state of Minnesota and the nation will always be remembered. Muriel was a truly wonderful human being and as the spouse of former Vice President Hubert Humphrey and then as a United States Senator herself, Muriel secured a significant place for herself in history. With genuine care and optimism, Muriel and Hubert exemplified the very best of what it means to be an American while helping others understand the importance of social equality and public service. Muriel's motivation to push forward during hard times taught the nation a valuable lesson; "we can do better."

Muriel Humphrey balanced her many roles with incredible success. She created a loving, sheltered home life for her husband and four children, to counteract the national publicity surrounding their political life. In addition, Muriel campaigned whole-heartedly and as a politician's wife, she conducted her public role with poise and dignity. Muriel assumed Hubert's United States Senate seat after his death in January 1978, making her the only woman in the Senate at the time and the first female Senator ever from the state of Minnesota. Admired throughout her life, Muriel remains a role model and inspiration for all of us.

After her marriage to businessman Max Brown in 1981, Muriel stepped away from the spotlight and dedicated time to herself and her family. Although she never again pursued a life in politics, Muriel continued to teach a valuable lesson to those around her about ad-

ressing national and international issues, without forgetting one's roots. The death of this courageous woman marks a significant loss for both the people of Minnesota and the nation. She will be deeply missed.

THE SENIOR CITIZENS
PROTECTION ACT

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 29, 1998

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a modified version of H.R. 4155, the Senior Citizen Protection Act. H.R. 4155 would expand the authority of state Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCUs) to investigate fraud and abuse beyond the Medicaid Program. H.R. 4155 would allow the states and their MFCUs to protect senior citizens by investigating all forms of health care fraud and empowering them to assist state and local authorities in investigations of abuse and neglect against residents in assisted living and other board and care facilities. This legislation would help Federal, state, and local officials crack down on rampant health care fraud and let each and every one of us feel secure that our loved ones are safe in their retirement years.

Legislation is necessary because current law prohibits Medicaid Fraud Control Units (MFCU) from pursuing Medicare fraud when it is uncovered through a Medicaid investigation. Many times, a MFCU referral to federal authorities does not result in investigation or prosecution. Also, MFCUs are prohibited from utilizing their resources and expertise to assist state and local authorities who are responsible for ensuring that patients receive quality care in assisted living residences and other residential care facilities.

After extensive conversations with the various stakeholders which could be affected by this legislation, I have made two modifications to H.R. 4155.

Today's bill modifies Section (2)(a) of H.R. 4155 by clarifying the authority between Federal officials and the MFCUs when the MFCUs decide to pursue an allegation of non-Medicaid fraud. Clearly, states should be empowered to pursue Medicare and other Federal health program fraud uncovered during a Medicaid investigation. However, this new provision would ensure that the inspector general of a federal agency which is responsible for eliminating Federal health care fraud retains the absolute discretion to take over the investigation and prosecution of the case. My expectation is that the HHS Inspector General and the U.S. Department of Justice will develop the appropriate protocols with the state Medicaid Fraud Control Units and the state Attorneys General to implement this legislation.

Today's bill also modifies Section (2)(c) of H.R. 4155 by clarifying the authority of MFCUs to investigate abuse in assisted living and other residential care facilities. Today's bill states that MFCUs may only investigate at the request of state and local agencies who have the current responsibility for ensuring quality care in such facilities under state law. The MFCUs have resources and expertise that clearly would benefit state agencies in the fight against abuse in senior's facilities. The cooperation and expertise of the MFCUs will