

TRIBUTE TO JOHN PEPPER

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to a leader in the Cincinnati community, Mr. John Pepper, who has recently announced his decision to step down as the Chief Executive Officer of the Procter & Gamble Company at year-end.

Under Mr. Pepper's leadership, Procter & Gamble has introduced exciting new products, moved into new markets overseas, and established a strong strategic plan for continued sales growth that will benefit the people of Southwest Ohio.

While he is highly regarded in business circles for his outstanding work at the helm of Procter & Gamble, his contributions to the Greater Cincinnati community, our state and our nation go well beyond his business successes. For years, he has devoted an enormous amount of his personal time and energy to improving the quality of life for all Americans.

Education has been his passion: he is a founder of an innovative youth development program called the Cincinnati Youth Collaborative, through which he has touched the lives of many thousands of young people in our area. He has led the effort to get businesses directly involved in improving public education, both in Ohio and nationwide, through the National Education Summit, the Business Roundtable, The Governor's Education Management Council and various other state and federal efforts.

John Pepper has also shown his commitment to service through over 30 years of volunteering for the Cincinnati United Way and Community Chest. In 1994, he chaired the most successful United Way Campaign ever in Greater Cincinnati.

I have had the opportunity to know John Pepper both in my official capacity and through our mutual involvement with the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati and the National Underground Railroad Freedom Center. In both efforts he was a founding trustee whose credibility and guidance was crucial to the success of the organization and its mission. Time and time again he has proven himself to be a business leader willing to give generously of his time and energy to help others.

While John Pepper's leadership as CEO of Procter & Gamble will be missed, I know many of us look forward to continuing to work with him on projects to make a difference in our community.

HONORING AIRMAN 1ST CLASS
JUSTIN WOTASIK

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I speak today to honor the life of a dedicated young man who died while serving his country. Airman 1st Class Justin Christopher Wotasik was one of twelve persons killed last month in a helicopter

collision near Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. His unit, the 66th Rescue Squadron, was involved in a training exercise when the crash occurred.

Justin graduated in 1996 from Palmdale High School and was an Eagle Scout who attended the 1993 National Scout Jamboree in Virginia. He was one of those rare individuals who at a young age had a profound sense of purpose and knew what he wanted to do with his life. In his brief life, he served as an inspiration to others while symbolizing the dedication shared by many young men and women who pursue a military career.

Justin, who would have celebrated his 20th birthday this month, was buried today in Arlington National Cemetery. Justin, for all you did and all your stood for, thank you and may God bless you.

HOW GREAT THOU ART

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder, thy power throughout the universe displayed:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art!! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

When through the woods and forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees; When I look down from my lofty mountain grandeur, and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art!! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in; that on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, He bled and died to take away my sin:

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art!! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

When Christ shall come, with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart! Then I shall bow in humble adoration, and there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art!! Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee: How great Thou art, how great Thou art.

IN HONOR OF THE SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Seventh Anniversary of the Independence of the Armenian Republic, which was celebrated last Monday, September 21st.

Mr. Speaker, last month, we showed on the floor of this House that the Armenian people and nation have many friends in the Con-

gress. During the debate on the Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, we succeeded in rolling back an effort to repeal Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act—a provision barring direct aid to the Government of Azerbaijan until that country lifts its blockades of Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh. I'm extremely proud to have been involved in that bipartisan effort. My goal, and that of my colleagues, as American elected officials, was to ensure that we keep a valuable and moral law on the books. But I'm also glad that, the way things worked out, it turned out to be a nice Independence Day present to Armenia.

Mr. Speaker, the story of the Armenian people—one of the world's most ancient and enduring cultures, the first nation to adopt Christianity as its national religion—is an inspiring saga of courage and devotion to family and nation. It is also an unforgettable story of the triumph of a people over adversity and tragedy. Earlier in this century, in one of history's most horrible crimes against humanity, 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered by the Ottoman Turkish Empire. Every April, Members of this House join in commemoration of the Armenian Genocide. We can never relent, and we will never relent, in our efforts to remind the world that this tragedy is an historic fact—despite the efforts of so-called "revisionists," many of them funded by the Turkish government, to deny the truth—and to make sure that our nation, the world community, and especially the Turkish nation, come to terms with and appropriately commemorate this historic fact.

During the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the people of Armenia briefly established an independent state. But the Armenian lands were absorbed either into Atatürk's Turkey, where traces of Armenian history and culture were completely wiped out, or the Soviet Union, where at least some Armenian cultural presence was maintained, even if most of the political shots were called in Moscow.

Mr. Speaker, it was the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 that allowed the Armenian people to re-establish a state and a nation, to create a society where their language, culture, religion and other institutions would be able to prosper. The progress made in seven short years by the Republic of Armenia has been an inspiration—not only for the sons and daughters of the Diaspora, but for all Americans who support the cause of freedom. Having survived the Genocide, and having endured decades under the domination of the Soviet Union, the brave people of Armenia have endeavored to build a free and proud nation, based on the principles of democracy and a market economy.

Mr. Speaker, as they have for so much of their history, the Armenian people have accomplished all this against daunting odds. The tiny, land-locked Republic of Armenia is surrounded by hostile neighbors—Turkey and Azerbaijan—who have imposed blockades that have halted the delivery of basic necessities. Yet, independent Armenia continues to persevere. While democracy has proven to be elusive in much of the former Soviet bloc, democratic Armenia held multi-party Presidential elections this year that continued the steady progress towards the permanent taking root of the institutions of democracy and civil society.

As the founder and co-chairman, with the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. PORTER], of the

Congressional Caucus on Armenia Issues, I consider U.S.-Armenia relations to be one of our key foreign policy objectives. Support for Armenia is in our practical interests, helping to support a stable nation in a strategically important and often unstable part of the world. Standing by Armenia is also consistent with America's calling to support democracy and human rights, and to defend free peoples throughout the world.

Mr. Speaker, I want to emphasize that the people of Armenia want good relations with their neighbors and the entire world community, and I believe the moral, political and economic power of the United States can go a long way toward helping Armenia achieve that goal.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that as we mark future Independence Days of the Republic of Armenia, we can look back with pride on building peace and prosperity in the entire Trans-Caucasus region, so that the people of Armenia and their neighbors can enjoy a stable, hopeful future. I hope that the Republic of Turkey and Azerbaijan will have responded positively to Armenia's offer to normalize relations, exchanging diplomats and allowing the free flow of goods and people across their borders. I hope that, with the active participation of the United States, we will have resolved the Nagorno Karabagh conflict, in a manner that guarantees the security and self-determination of the people of Karabagh. I hope that the effort to tap the vast Caspian Sea oil reserves will finally culminate in the construction of a pipeline carrying the oil west to Mediterranean ports through Azerbaijan, Armenia and Turkey—thereby further linking those neighbors in mutually beneficial security and economic ties. I hope that our policy in the region will not be overly influenced by the development of these oil reserves, at the expense of the values of democracy and human rights.

Thus, Mr. Speaker, while the reality for the people of the Republic of Armenia continues to be difficult, let us take this occasion to wish them well on the occasion of their Independence Day, and, more important, on their ongoing journey to establish a stable, democratic republic and a permanent homeland for the Armenian people in the Caucasus.

REDUCE THE HIDDEN TAX ON AMERICAN INVESTORS

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, on July 14, 1998, along with the distinguished Chief Deputy Democratic Whip, the Gentleman from New Jersey, I introduced H.R. 4213, the Savings and Investment Relief Act of 1998. This legislation would cap the amount of stock transaction fees which could be collected by the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Collections for the various SEC "user fees"—which were designed solely to fund the Commission—had grown over time to significantly exceed the SEC's budget. In 1996, we passed legislation to bring fee collections more in line with the SEC's budget. However, actual collections have continued to skyrocket. This year alone, the SEC will bring in \$1.2 billion in fees—four times its budget.

These fees have become a large and unintended tax on all Americans who invest in the stock market. The distinguished gentleman from Texas, the Chairman of the Ways & Means Committee, has written to me to express the Committee's view that the excess fees amount to taxes. At this time Mr. Speaker, I would ask to have this letter made a part of the RECORD.

Mr. Speaker, this tax is paid by all Americans who own and sell stocks. This includes individuals and families investing for their future—for needs such as retirement and children's education. The tax affects mutual fund investors, pension plans, and other retirement vehicles, such as IRAs and 401(k) plans. It is time to stop this hidden tax on hard working investors.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4213 has received a groundswell of support. In addition to the distinguished Chief Deputy Democratic Whip, the bill now has close to 60 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle, including virtually the entire Republican leadership, and the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana, the Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. Cosponsors include a number of Members from the Appropriations, Commerce and Ways & Means Committees. I would like to enter a list of the bill's cosponsors into the RECORD. It has been endorsed by a number of outside groups, including Americans for Tax Reform, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the National Federation of Independent Businesses, the National Taxpayers Union, Citizens for a Sound Economy, the Profit Sharing/401(k) Council of America, and dozens of state-level taxpayer advocacy groups.

Perhaps most importantly, we have revised this legislation so that it has no impact on the collection and spending levels in the pending FY99 Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations bill and to avoid pay-go scoring problems. I am pleased to announce that the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has scored this revised language as revenue neutral. At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to enter into the RECORD a copy of the revised legislation and the CBO letter scoring the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it is imperative to act on this legislation this year. Due to the budget scoring rules, it will be virtually impossible to move a revenue neutral solution next year, once the CBO revises its baseline upward to reflect the reality of the fee surplus. This hidden tax is having a real impact on hardworking families saving for their retirement. We often talk in Congress about providing tax relief to families. Let's start by giving back some of the unintended hidden tax on investments. Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to act on this legislation expeditiously.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, September 23, 1998.

Hon. JERRY SOLOMON,
Rayburn House Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR JERRY: I am writing to express my support for what you are trying to accomplish in H.R. 4213, the "Savings and Investment Relief Act of 1999." The Committee on Ways and Means has long taken a jurisdictional interest in the fees collected by the Securities and Exchange Commission. In our view, these "fees" are taxes because they greatly exceed the SEC's regulatory costs. We have worked for several years with the Committees on Commerce and Appropriations to rectify this problem.

We last addressed SEC fees in the National Securities Markets Improvement Act of 1996. That legislation was intended to reform the SEC fee structure and bring the total amount of fees down to the level of the SEC's budget. In a letter to Chairman Bliley (whose committee has jurisdiction over the SEC), I noted both my and his longstanding goal to reduce these "fees" so that they truly are fees rather than taxes. Although the extension and phase-down of SEC fees in the Act was longer and slower than we would have preferred, I recognized that it was the best that we could achieve under the circumstances. I also noted that the Committee on Ways and Means reserved jurisdictional interest in this fee structure, and that I would strongly oppose any attempts to delay or lengthen the fee phase-down schedule provided by the Act.

The 1996 Act was a compromise that took years to achieve, so I am cautious about modifying it. However, it has become increasingly clear that actual fee collections, particularly section 31 transaction fee collections, will exceed what we estimated in 1996. Accordingly, I support your effort to cap the section 31 transaction fees, provided that it does not endanger the fee phase-down schedule in the 1996 Act and does not create a PAYGO problem. Under such circumstances (and without prejudice to the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Ways and Means), I would not seek sequential referral of H.R. 4213 or have any objection to its condonation by the House.

I want to commend you for your tireless work and leadership in this area. As always, you are watching out for taxpayers.

With best personal regards,

Sincerely,

BILL ARCHER,
Chairman.

COSPONSORS H.R. 4213

Representatives Menendez, Forbes, Foley, Ehrlich, Towns, Houghton, Walsh, Scarborough, Gilman, Sessions, English, Cook, Pappas, and Hall of Texas.

Representatives Ramstad, Blagojevich, Largent, Christian-Green, Kelly, Arme, Hastert, Peterson of Pennsylvania, Goode, Cox, Barton, Velázquez, Norwood, Deal, and Livingston.

Representatives Hobson, Frelinghuysen, Riley, Sam Johnson of Texas, Pitts, Cubin, Quinn, Dickey, Manzullo, Pickering, McIntosh, Jackson-Lee of Texas, Barcia, and Chabot.

Representatives Hostettler, Ryun, Fox, Pryce, McHugh, Doolittle, DeLay, Boehlert, Boucher, Crane, Radanovich, Boehner, Paxon, and Brady of Pennsylvania.

H.R. 4213

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. TRANSACTION FEES.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 31 of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 (15 U.S.C. 78ee) is amended by adding the following new subsection:

"(h) TRANSACTION FEE LIMITATION: DEPOSIT OF FEES.—

(1) LIMITATION ON TRANSACTION FEES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal years 1999 through 2006, the Commission shall not collect any fees described in subsections (b), (c) and (d) which in the aggregate exceed:

"(i) \$430 million during fiscal year 1999;

"(ii) \$396 million during fiscal year 2000;

"(iii) \$434 million during fiscal year 2001;

"(iv) \$468 million during fiscal year 2002;

"(v) \$511 million during fiscal year 2003;

"(vi) \$557 million during fiscal year 2004;