

the 1995 law. For example, the 1995 Act created a "safe harbor" provision to encourage companies to disclose valuable information about their prospects to investors. However, this provision is not being implemented because executives still are concerned about their exposure to strike suits in State courts. This hurts investors who lose access to valuable information, and it undermines the efficiency of securities markets.

It is time to close the loopholes. The Securities Litigation Uniform Standards Act of 1998 will finally slam the door on strike suits by establishing Federal court as the exclusive venue for securities class actions. This legislation targets abuses in our court system, but it also protects the rights of consumers who actually suffer from fraud.

I urge my colleagues to support this important bill.

PROGRESS FOR LATVIA

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, the editorial of the October 12, 1998, edition of *The Washington Post* very appropriately lauds the continued progress Latvia is making in perfecting its democratic form of government, especially as it relates to the complex and controversial subject of extending citizenship and civil rights to the very large proportion of non-citizens which reside in that country. Of the estimated 600,000 non-citizens in a population of 2.5 million, most of the non-citizens are Russian nationals who are part of or ancestors of the Russian populations encouraged to resettle in Latvia by the Soviets after their brutal subjugation of the Baltic states to implement the infamous Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939. Many of the Latvians including their president, Karlis Ulmanis, were forcibly removed to Siberia to fall unspeakable hardship and death.

Despite the understandable frustration and anger among Latvians of their loss of independence under the domination of the Soviet Union, the Latvian votes commendably rejected a referendum that would have derailed legislation to liberalize the requirements for obtaining citizenship for its non-citizen residents. In a country like Latvia, where ethnic Latvians now make up slightly less than half of the people living there, Latvian voters have sensibly recognized the reality of the changes it must make to maintain domestic tranquility and integrate its citizens into a unified force to build its future and reduce one crucial element of controversy with its neighbor, the Russian Federation.

Mr. Speaker, this Member encourages his colleagues to read the following editorial and to act to individually commend the Latvian government and voters for their good judgment, even in the face of the suffering and repeated provocations they have felt from the Soviet Union.

[From the Washington Post, Oct. 12, 1998]

LATVIA'S PROGRESS

One of the great dramas of this decade has been the struggle of three small Baltic countries to reestablish their national identities after a half-century of Soviet occupation. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are succeed-

ing more quickly and with less fuss than anyone had reason to hope. Only on rare occasions of tension, such as when Russia suddenly began putting the squeeze on Latvia last spring, does one or another Baltic nation make a brief appearance in the news. A recent referendum held in Latvia typically went mostly unnoticed here.

The Soviet government shipped so many Latvians to Siberia and settled so many Russian-speakers in Latvia that when it regained independence in 1991 barely half its residents were ethnic Latvians. For any tiny nation trying to preserve a language and culture in the shadow of a large power, this would have posed a challenge; for a nation that felt it barely had escaped extermination, the challenge was particularly sharp. At the same time, many Latvians realized they could not hope to join modern Europe unless they welcomed and integrated all of their residents into their society. Many realized that a large pool of disaffected ethnic Russians would offer a perpetual pretext to make trouble for politicians in Moscow.

The Oct. 3 referendum concerned the rights of these 600,000 noncitizens (in a population of 2.5 million). In June, parliament approved a liberalizing law allowing any number to apply for citizenship instead of setting an annual quota. The law also qualified for citizenship children born since 1991 to noncitizens. Latvian nationalists opposed to the law, or resentful of Russian and Western pressure on the matter, gathered enough signatures for a referendum. But Latvians, by 55 percent to 43 percent, endorsed the changes.

Latvians still must demonstrate a sustained commitment to integration through language classes and other means. Russian speakers still must demonstrate their commitment to their new country. But the referendum result is an important symbol of Latvia's desire to join the West as a liberal democracy. Now Western institutions that strongly encouraged this result, and in particular the European Union, should respond by accelerating Latvia's inclusion in Europe.

THE ASSET-BUILDING FOR WORKING AMERICANS ACT

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, as you know, there are a variety of different manners through which eligibility for public assistance programs are limited according to income and resources. Unfortunately, these complex procedures often produce unwanted effects. I have particular concerns with the manner in which eligibility for public assistance programs is affected by savings accrued through the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The legislation I will introduce today, the "Asset-Building for Working Americans Act," will seek to correct these problems. While the Asset-Building for Working Americans Act may undergo some changes before next year, I hope this original draft will stimulate a productive debate and suggestions for possible improvement before its reintroduction in the 106th Congress.

Existing income and resource limitations governing eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicaid, and public housing disregard money saved from EITC payments for two months. At the end of these two months, working families must spend their

EITC payment in order to prevent losing their eligibility for these programs. As a result, working families may miss the opportunity to build the savings needed to accrue enough assets to escape poverty permanently.

The Asset-Building for Working Americans Act corrects this unfortunate situation by adjusting the resource limitations for SSI, Medicaid, and public housing to disregard savings made through the EITC for 12 months—the same provision governing the eligibility for food stamps at the present time. The bill will also encourage states to define eligibility for Temporary Aid to Needy Families payments in the same manner.

Permitting families to save their EITC payments for up to a year and still remain eligible for these public assistance programs would allow low-income working families to live and raise their children in health and safety while saving money for long-term security. In effect, families could save two EITC payments rather than just one—up to \$4,304 for a family of three. Once these two annual EITC payments make such a family ineligible for public assistance under the new resource limitations proposed in my bill, the family would have saved the money needed to take good steps towards building a better future, such as starting a small business; getting an education; or making a down payment towards a first home.

The Asset-Building for Working Americans Act does not encourage increased government handouts or dependence. It will instead encourage working Americans to save their EITC payments for the future by assuring them of access to the temporary assistance needed at the present. The Asset-Building for Working Americans Act is a good first step towards encouraging low-income families to look towards tomorrow today, and I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to work with me in support of it during the next Congress.

NATIONAL SALVAGE MOTOR VEHICLE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 1998

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, at some point, I hope that my Republican friends will explain to me their views on federalism. With this bill, the Majority is embracing the notion that the Federal Government possesses wisdom superior to the states on the subject of issuing motor vehicle titles.

The legislation stops short of a federal takeover of the state function of titling motor vehicles or creating a new Federal Department of Motor Vehicles. However, it tells every state in the country that it must comply with new federal regulations governing how states title motor vehicles. These new regulations will establish, and I quote, "uniform standards, procedures, and methods for the issuance and control of titles for motor vehicles and for information to be contained on such titles."

In Committee, Democratic Members raised a number of concerns about this legislation. Those problems still remain in the bill we have before us today.

First, this legislation gives no money to the states to perform inspections, if required, nor

does it provide funds to carry out other new, federally imposed duties. I must admit I'm a bit perplexed. I thought my Republican colleagues had committed not to impose costly new burdens on state and local governments without compensating them for their expense.

Second, the bill could still preempt state laws that give the consumer greater protection. Although, under certain circumstances, the amendment before us lets the states set the percentage of value loss that will define what a salvage vehicle is, this bill could still preempt state laws that provide greater consumer protections in other areas of salvage vehicle title branding.

Third, the bill gives the Department of Transportation authority to issue regulations covering all aspects of vehicle titling by the states. That may be more than needed to accomplish the bill's stated purpose, which is to require title branding for salvage vehicles nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, for these reasons, the National Association of Attorneys General has opposed this legislation, as has a broad-based coalition of consumer groups. Among the consumer groups opposing the bill are: the Consumer Federation of America, Public Citizen, Consumers Union, and the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

Clearly, there are legitimate theft prevention and consumer protection issues involved in the way the states title motor vehicles. I am not opposed to addressing these in a prudent and careful manner which respects the rights of the states.

I, therefore, suggest strongly that this bill simply needs more work and that it should not be enacted into law in its present form. This legislation seeks to address important public policy goals. However, we should be careful that our solution to these public policy concerns does not create new problems that we are not prepared to deal with.

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. PATSY T. MINK

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 1998

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in strong support of S. 2432, the Assistive Technology Act of 1998.

Assistive technologies have dramatically improved the quality of life for thousands of people in Hawaii and millions around the country. In addition to increasing the range of physical functions a person is capable of, assistive technologies provide psychological benefits increasing self esteem and empowering individuals with independence.

The Assistive Technology Act authorizes a range of programs designed to eliminate barriers preventing maximum utilization of Assistive Technologies. In addition to grants for public awareness, promotion, outreach and research, S. 2432, provides for programs that would encourage various segments of the community to become involved in assistive technology efforts.

I am particularly pleased that this bill contains specific provisions for outreach activities in rural and impoverished urban areas and for children and older individuals.

I am also delighted that S. 2432 authorizes alternative financing mechanisms including: loan guarantee or insurance programs, low-interest loan funds and interest buy-down programs; to help individuals with disabilities and their families to purchase assistive technology devices.

For many individuals with disabilities, assistive technologies means freedom and independence. What most of us take for granted.

I support the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 and urge its immediate passage.

RECOGNITION OF EMMA UDOVICH INDUCTED INTO THE TEXAS SENIORS HALL OF FAME

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize Emma Udovich, of El Paso, as a recent inductee of the Texas Seniors Hall of Fame. Emma was honored on September 22, 1998 at the opening ceremonies of the state games in Temple, Texas. At 74 she has won a roomful of medals for her athletic endeavors.

In 1986 Emma Udovich heard about the Senior Games over the radio in El Paso, she entered two cycling events and won two gold medals. Emma did not begin competing until she was in her sixties. In the next 13 years she found herself entering over 14 venues in the Senior Games as well as all 6 national Senior Games all over the Country.

Among her accomplishments Emma boasts the following titles: the first woman to be named El Paso Senior Games; Athlete of the Year (1994), Broke Senior national games; cycling record in mile race (1991), Lubbock Sports Classic; Outstanding Woman Athlete (1997), and Emma has won more than 200 gold medals among her 300 awards in senior games competition since 1986.

I am proud to recognize my fellow El Pasoan, Emma Udovich, for her remarkable accomplishments. Emma is a role model for all of us, at 61 she found her calling in athletic competition and pursued her dream. Today Emma has realized that dream through hard work, perseverance and the love of athletic competition. She is a beacon of hope for us all, and shows us that it is never too late to pursue your dreams.

HONORING ELEANOR GARLISI FOR HER YEARS OF SERVICE AS HEAD NURSE IN THE OFFICE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN, US CAP- ITOL

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Eleanor Garlisi and her six years of service as the Head Nurse in the Office of Attending Physician of the US Capitol.

On November 3, Nurse Garlisi will retire from the Office of Attending Physician. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nurse Garlisi for her years of service to this body

and for making sure that all of my distinguished colleagues have had their shots.

During her tenure as Head Nurse, Eleanor has done everything from educating her patients on how to improve their health to providing emergency care for members, staff, and visitors to these hallowed halls.

I know that all of my colleagues who have had to visit the Office of Attending Physician will join me in thanking Nurse Garlisi for her care and compassion. I congratulate Nurse Garlisi on her years of service and wish her continued happiness and success in her future endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO SUE ELLIS

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize today the accomplishments of my good friend, Sue Ellis. On September 30, Sue retired from her position as Director of Congressional Relations for Gallaudet University after nearly thirty years of service. During her years at Gallaudet, Sue has held many positions and her list of accomplishments is long.

Sue has been a wonderful asset to Gallaudet through her commitment to furthering the causes of the hearing-impaired community. Under Sue's watch, the University has flourished. Gallaudet has grown from a college to a university—an institution of higher learning led by a hearing-impaired president. Through much of her work with Congress, Sue has helped increase awareness of the importance of Gallaudet University to every community, not just the hearing-impaired.

Personally, Sue has been a very good friend to me and my staff and has encouraged my office to become more involved with the hearing-impaired community in my district. Sue has helped my office hire hearing-impaired interns and full-time staff and we appreciate her support and assistance to make this possible by helping to install the proper technology and arrange sign language classes for my staff and me.

I have also worked closely with Sue in her tireless efforts to organize the Congressional Basketball Game. This fundraising effort has grown from a small event into a tremendous success with national support and raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for the students at Gallaudet.

Through our many years of working closely with Sue, my office considers her a part of our family. I would like to personally thank her for her dedication to an important issue and her commitment to making our world a better place for all. We wish you all of the best in your retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, October 12, 1998

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, on October 9, after 6:00 p.m. and on October 10, I was absent from the Chamber. I ask unanimous consent that the RECORD reflect that had