

Col. Hoffman, his lovely wife Joyce and their two daughters, Jessica Marie and Jennifer Gabrielle will soon begin a new life in his hometown in New York. I know I speak for the entire McGuire community in wishing Steve and his family the very best as they leave the U.S. Air Force. I offer my personal thanks and the thanks of an appreciative nation as he begins a new chapter in his life.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
ESTEBAN TORRES

SPEECH OF

HON. SILVESTRE REYES

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 6, 1998

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the accomplishments and friendship of Congressman ESTEBAN TORRES who will be retiring from the House of Representatives at the end of this session. He is truly an inspirational leader who will leave this legislative body with the respect and admiration of his colleagues.

His life story reflects the value of hard work and determination. Growing up the son of Mexican immigrants during the depression, he has remained a humble and dignified individual. He has never forgotten his roots nor the sacrifices made by his parents and their generation in speaking out for all Americans.

After serving in the United States Army as a Korean War conflict veteran, his military service was just the beginning of a life of service. Working as an auto plant worker, he became a labor leader throughout the 1960's and ever since has stood up for the working people of this country and around the world. His leadership was soon recognized within the labor movement and led him to speak on behalf of workers rights throughout the Americas. His advocacy on behalf of better pay, compensation, benefits and conditions for workers led to his involvement in the broader community by starting a community development corporation in East Los Angeles which grew into one of the largest anti-poverty agencies in the nation.

Fortunately his international diplomacy and economic development abilities were recognized by President Jimmy Carter. In 1976, Congressman TORRES answered the call of the President, and served as Ambassador to the United Nation's Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization and later as Special Assistant to the President for Hispanic Affairs.

Seeing an opportunity to serve as an elected official, we should all be grateful that in 1982 Congressman TORRES won a seat in this House, and has honorably served in the House of Representatives for the past 15 years.

Since coming to this legislative body he has worked to improve the quality of life for all Americans by bringing greater job opportunities, protecting consumers, and cleaning up the environment. He has taken a lead role in bills impacting Trade, Banking, Crime, Housing, and Economic Development. Throughout, he has been a powerful voice for minorities and the working people of the United States.

His committee assignments on Appropriations and Banking and his leadership position as Deputy Democratic Whip reflect his tremendous ability to bring together diverse interests

and work toward common goals. Moreover, as Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, he set a high standard for addressing the important issues of the growing Hispanic population.

Congressman TORRES is a person who has always provided me with invaluable guidance and support. I will always appreciate his efforts to improve conditions along the United States-Mexico border which is so important for my community.

He is a true champion of the people, a friend, and someone whose departure will be greatly felt in this legislative chamber. His work on behalf of the 34th Congressional district of California was tremendous, and his constituents can always be proud of the difference his tenure made for their community. I wish him well in his future pursuits as I know that he will remain engaged and active in working to bring greater opportunities for Americans everywhere.

TRIBUTE TO CARNEY CAMPION

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of my Congressional District's very dedicated individuals, Carney Campion. Carney is being honored as he retires from the Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District after 23 years of successful innovative transportation leadership. I am proud to mark this occasion with his family, friends, and colleagues on November 30, 1998 as we celebrate his truly remarkable accomplishments.

Carney Campion is widely recognized as a transportation pioneer in his service to California's North Coast. As the eighth General Manager of the Bridge District, Carney successfully balanced a comprehensive transportation plan that effectively kept the North Coast linked to San Francisco. Due to Carney's strong leadership skills he was able to adapt the changing needs of our communities to the needs of individuals. He reduced automobile traffic and congestion, while protecting the environment with efficient and reliable alternatives such as buses and ferries.

Carney's career accomplishments are many. Among the most noteworthy are the development and modernization of the unified bus and ferry system; the implementation of the District's public awareness, environmental health and public safety program; the purchase of the abandoned Northwestern Pacific Railroad right-of-way from Novato to Willits for vital future rail service; and his fervent commitment to the seismic safety of the Golden Gate Bridge.

Carney has been instrumental in the advancement of electric toll collection systems on bridges throughout the world. As a long time advocate of North Coast transportation matters, he served as Past President to the Board of Directors on the Electric Toll and Traffic Management Task Force, and Vice Chair to the International Task Force of the International Bridge, Tunnel, and Turnpike Association. In his many impressive civic endeavors, Carney has served as Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President to the Press

Club of San Francisco during his 35 years of membership. He was also Vice President of the Marin Forum, and Director of the YMCA/Marin and the Marin Theatre Company.

Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to pay tribute to Carney Campion. The North Coast owes Carney Campion a great deal of gratitude for his tireless efforts throughout his 23 years of public service at the Golden Gate Bridge District. I extend my hearty congratulations and best wishes to Carney, his wife Kathryn of 45 years, his six children, and ten grandchildren for continued success and joy in the years to come. Carney Campion will be missed, and remembered.

TRIBUTE TO MS. MARY TULLIS

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Ms. Mary Tullis of Rosedale, Mississippi. Ms. Tullis is a shining example for both recipients of public assistance and government policy makers of the ability for hard-working people to escape welfare when provided with the proper community support.

No longer requiring public assistance, Ms. Tullis was recently awarded a "Success Story Award" by the United States Small Business Administration. She is now serving as a student assistant for the Center for Community Development, which is cosponsored by the SBA and the Small Business Development Center at Delta State, and will be applying for a position as a graduate assistant in the 1999 Spring Semester.

Ms. Tullis has been attending Delta State University for the past 3 years and will graduate with a major in Sociology in December. She is on the Dean's List and has been named a Faculty Scholar. Once in graduate school, Ms. Tullis hopes to write her thesis on matters relating to "Welfare, Women and Education: Attaining and Sustaining Financial Independence."

Ms. Tullis sets an example not just as a dedicated worker, but also as a superb parent. She is 47 years old, single, and a mother of 11 children ranging from 9 to 32 years old. Five of her children are in college, one is on scholarship at Yale University and another is almost a senior on scholarship at a boarding school in New England. Two of her children have already received degrees, one in Nursing and the other in Law and Economics.

In addition to her individual achievements, Ms. Tullis has unselfishly sought to assist other public assistance recipients in following her course. A volunteer for numerous community services, she has recently been selected to be a member of the Americorps Delta Service Corps. Her work in the Delta Service Corps will include educating and promoting community awareness in the values of being a volunteer, and she will also assist in creating the Community Service Projects and Signature Projects to locate resources which can be used for further development.

Mr. Speaker, I commend Ms. Tullis for her outstanding achievements, and I would also like to complement Delta State and all the community service organizations which provided her with support in her persistent drive

towards independence. Together they are a model of what can be achieved in this nation through community support and individual effort.

INTRODUCTION OF THE QMB IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1998

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today Mr. STARK and I introduced legislation that will dramatically improve the Medicare program for its low-income beneficiaries. If passed, our legislation will ensure that Medicare beneficiaries eligible for existing income protections actually receive the benefits they deserve.

The current Medicare program places many beneficiaries at risk due to the inadequacy of its benefit package. Specifically, Medicare's high out-of-pocket costs for "covered services" and its failure to cover the cost of prescription drugs and long-term care can seriously erode a beneficiary's total family income. Additionally, as Congress continues to push all beneficiaries into Medicare managed care, many more low- and moderate-income beneficiaries will face increased financial risks.

In 1995, 12.2% of Medicare's 35 million beneficiaries were at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), 6.2% were between 100% and 120% FPL, and 4.9% had incomes between 120% and 135% FPL. Despite their dual eligibility for both Medicare and Medicaid, health care spending averaged roughly 30% of their total family income.

The programs that Congress designed to protect low-income beneficiaries from unreasonable out-of-pocket costs—the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB), Specified Low-Income Beneficiary (SLMB), and Qualified Individuals (QI-1 and QI-2) programs—are notorious for having poor enrollment of eligible Medicare beneficiaries.

A recent report by Families USA found that nationwide, roughly 3.5 million Medicare beneficiaries are eligible for QMB, SLMB & QI-1 benefits but are not receiving them. The report highlighted that Washington State was the 10th worst state at enrollment with roughly 100,000 eligible beneficiaries not covered—costing WA low-income beneficiaries \$55 million alone in lost Social Security benefits.

The lost Social Security benefits are attributable to eligible seniors having their part B premiums automatically deducted by Medicare from their Social Security checks each month even though they are eligible for one of the existing income protection programs. The loss of \$43.80 month/\$525.60 year is tremendous to a Medicare beneficiary whose income hovers around \$8,000 to \$9,000 a year.

The reasons for poor enrollment vary, so rather than dwell on our collective failure, we propose action to fix the problem. Our legislative solution simply would presumptively enroll eligible Medicare beneficiaries in the appropriate QMB or SLMB protection program—enrolling as close to 100 percent of eligibles as possible.

As Congress and the National Commission on the Future of Medicare struggle to reform the Medicare program, we need to keep an open mind about how we can do more to improve, rather than harm, the program.

Presumptively enrolling current Medicare eligibles for existing low-income protections would be a good start. My hope is that in addition to making this necessary improvement, the next Congress and the Commission also will consider other options to enhance the low-income protections such as simplification through federalization and modernizing its eligibility, income, and asset test criteria.

MEDICAID PROTECTIONS FOR LOW-INCOME MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES

QMB: Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries eligible for financial assistance covering Medicare premiums, deductibles, and copayments for singles/couples at or below 100% of poverty—\$8,292/\$11,100 year.

SLMB: Specified Low-Income Medicare Beneficiaries eligible for Part B premium assistance for singles/couples between 100 & 120% of poverty—\$9,900/\$13,260 year.

QI-1: BBA '97 allows Qualified Individuals to apply for block grant assistance to pay for Part B premiums if the single/couple's income is between 120 and 135% of poverty—\$11,112/\$14,892 year.

QI-2: BBA '97 allows Qualified Individuals to apply for assistance to pay for the portion of the Part B premium increase caused by transfer of Home Health Services from Part A to Part B if the single/couple's income is between 135 and 175% of poverty. This benefit is estimated to be worth \$1.07/month per beneficiary.

Part B premiums cost \$43.80/month equaling \$525.60/year.

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH AND PREVENTION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 13, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 1722, The Women's Health Research and Prevention Amendments of 1998. This legislation is a positive step in the right direction towards prioritizing research and prevention in regards to women's health.

This timely legislation increases Congress support of research which will clearly benefit a segment of the population often relegated to a "second place" status in research. For too long, research on men has been extrapolated to women especially in the area of cardiovascular disease. It is time for Congress to acknowledge the lack of strong and complete research on women's health issues, and do something about it. The question should no longer be when, the question should be, shall we do it today? This legislation is our opportunity to tell the women of America that we recognize their unique health problems and want to advance plans to combat them.

The bill expands research and education in areas such as; breast, ovarian and related cancer, osteoporosis, Paget's and other bone diseases. These diseases have devastated many women, but this legislation allows us to continue to elucidate their pathogenesis, treat, and most importantly possibly prevent these diseases. The importance of the education and early detection programs this legislation extends should not go unnoticed. Education is one of the most powerful keys to empowering women with regards to their health. It also re-

moves the social isolation so many of these ailments may create. In addition S. 1722 will help women to be aware of preventative health programs and support groups designed to assist them in their time of need.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in an aye vote for this legislation. As I stated earlier the question is not when will we do it, the question is will we do it today?

IN SUPPORT OF THE PASSENGER SERVICES ENHANCEMENT ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 9, 1998

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill before us today to provide for the continuation of preclearance activities for air transit passengers.

I want to thank Mr. CRANE and Mr. SHAW for working with me on this important legislation to help facilitate the services Customs provides to process the massive amounts of people and products entering and existing our country.

This bill, which is similar to legislation Mr. CRANE and I introduced last April, would allow the Customs Service to access funds in the User Fee Accounts and enhance inspector staffing and equipment at preclearance service locations in foreign countries.

This is significant because if U.S. Customs eliminates these positions, preclearance for passengers to the United States will slow, travel will be disrupted, and the tourism industry in many states will suffer. Allowing the preclearance services to continue means a great deal to many employers in my district, like Northwest Airlines and all those affiliated with the Mall of America—which attracts more visitors each year than Disneyworld, Graceland and the Grand Canyon combined.

The Customs Service has said there are insufficient resources in its salaries and expenses account to fund the enhanced preclearance positions. This bill gives access to excess funds in the User Fee Account, without any additional cost to taxpayers. Acting-Commissioner Banks testified before our Ways and Means Committee in support of our earlier version of the legislation, and the airline industry supports it as well.

I appreciate how quickly the House has recognized the merits of this legislation and allowed us to bring it to the floor today. I urge my colleagues to join me in support of this critical bill.

KATHLEEN LUKENS—A LIVING SAINT

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep regret that I inform our colleagues of the passing of Mrs. Kathleen Lukens, a resident of Rockland County, NY, late last night.

Kathleen Lukens is a lady for whom the title "living saint" was exceptionally appropriate.