

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

## THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT OF 1998

**HON. JIM BUNNING**

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. BUNNING. Mr. Speaker, today, on behalf of myself and BARBARA KENNELLY, I am introducing the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Act of 1998. This legislation helps Social Security and Supplemental Security Income disability recipients return to a life of economic security and self-sufficiency.

Social Security programs are vital to all Americans. The disability program is particularly important because it protects workers and their families against severe financial hardship that occurs when workers sustain severe illnesses or disabling conditions that prevent them from working.

Due to advances in medicine, technology, and the field of rehabilitation, there are people who, despite serious disabilities, want to work and who could work if they were provided the kind of rehabilitation services they need. The disability program is like a big black hole—once people fall into the program they never seem to make their way out. In fact, less than 1 percent of disabled recipients ever leave the rolls because of work.

Our legislation is very simple. We remove many of the barriers that prevent individuals with disabilities from climbing out of that hole.

The consumer—the recipient with a disability—is number one. They choose the services they want from the providers they want. Generally, the provider of those services is paid for outcomes and long-term results. The payment process is designed to ensure that as many providers as possible are available to serve the consumer.

One of the primary obstacles facing disabled recipients who attempt to leave the Social Security rolls to work is the fear of losing health care. To help alleviate that fear, our bill will extend Medicare coverage for 2 additional years. This means that recipients would have Medicare coverage for a total of 6 years from the time they first make an attempt to work.

Due to the nature of their disability, many individuals incur extraordinary costs in trying to get a job and maintaining that job. This legislation creates a tax credit of 50 percent of impairment-related work expenses up to \$10,000 per year.

To better help consumers transition into work, the bill includes a requirement that SSA test a gradual offset of SSDI cash benefits by reducing monthly benefits \$1 for every \$2 in earnings over a determined level.

Through this legislation we are asking the Social Security Administration to become more than just a disability program administrator, we want them to be an ability program administrator. The Commissioner benefits from the counsel of an advisory panel, made up of consumers, providers, and employer representatives. And the program will be gradually

phased in, closely monitored, and thoroughly evaluated over time.

I am excited about the possibilities this bill creates for individuals with disabilities. I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in supporting this effort.

## SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY: THE TICKET TO WORK AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY ACT OF 1998

**HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I am today introducing, along with Rep. JIM BUNNING, bipartisan legislation to assist people with disabilities in returning to work. The Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Act will help to open the door to employment for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries.

Many of these beneficiaries would like to return to employment but find too many obstacles standing between them and a job. These obstacles often include the need for vocational rehabilitation, job training, and other assistance in finding and retaining a job. In addition, beneficiaries face the disincentives to work brought on by the loss of disability benefits and health care coverage. All of these stand in the way of a person who wants to leave the Social Security disability system for work.

Rep. BUNNING and I have worked on a bipartisan approach to reducing these disincentives. The legislation would afford beneficiaries three important bridges to employment. First, the legislation would provide SSDI and SSI beneficiaries a much greater choice of vocational rehabilitation providers, who help train and find jobs for individuals with disabilities. The bill would offer to disabled beneficiaries a ticket to work which could be presented to either a private vocational rehabilitation provider of the beneficiary's choice or a State vocational rehabilitation agency.

The bill would allow a beneficiary to choose the provider which best suits his or her needs and is most likely to assist that individual effectively in returning to work. Providers would be paid under an incentive system that would permit them to share in the savings to the government when the individual returns to work and is no longer receiving disability benefits.

Second, the bill addresses the principle fear facing disabled beneficiaries—the loss of health insurance coverage. The bill would offer Medicare coverage for at least 6 years for those individuals who leave the rolls to return to work. This is a 2-year extension over current law.

Finally, the legislation would make work pay. It would convert the current income tax deduction for the cost of work expenses related to one's impairment into a credit. The credit would be 50 percent of impairment-related ex-

penses up to \$10,000 in expenses. This would have the effect of permitting those who do not itemize to take into account the extraordinary work expenses, such as specialized computers or personal assistants, resulting from their disability. This is intended to cushion the blow of lost disability benefits and level the employment playing field between those people with disabilities and those without.

Leaving the disability rolls is no easy task. It is my hope that this bill will help to build a bridge to employment for people with disabilities. Every person who returns to work means one more person with a brighter future, and it means lower cost to the government. I hope our colleagues will join us in the bipartisan effort.

## FCC'S ROLE IN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

**HON. JOHN L. MICA**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, one of the intended outcomes of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 was that telecommunications services would be universally available at reasonable and affordable prices. To ensure that would happen, the Act provided for all telecommunications carriers to contribute to a universal fund subsidy. The FCC's attempts to implement this portion of the bill have been at best ineffective. Until the FCC begins to seriously take steps to ensure support of rural and residential service, we cannot consider this part of the job finished.

Another responsibility of the FCC, as set forth in the Telecommunications Act, was to implement a program assisting schools, libraries and health care facilities in entering the information age. However, Congress did not intend for this to be a tax and grant program. The entire issue of how the FCC is implementing this program is now being considered by Congressional committees. I am concerned that the FCC did not adequately consider the negative impact on the consumer or Congressional intent before implementing this program.

The FCC must understand that their role is not to rewrite the Act, but to implement the Act as it was written.

HONORING MATT CONWAY

**HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring a remarkable young man to your attention and to the attention of my colleagues in the House of Representatives.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

Matt Conway is a constituent from Florham Park, New Jersey and is a person affected by a developmental disability. I have had the opportunity to meet with him on several occasions and learn from him about some of the obstacles facing individuals with developmental disabilities. He has demonstrated to me how some of these difficulties can be overcome and I am proud to say that he has educated me on what can be done to help more individuals do the same. Matt is certainly a worthy advocate for himself and others.

On April 17, 1998, Matt will be one of 35 persons to be honored by the Foundation for Exceptional Children's Yes I Can! Program. The program honors outstanding achievements of children and youth with disabilities. Matt will receive his award in the area of employment.

Matt was nominated for this award by his teachers, friends and relatives and was selected out of hundreds of qualified nominees. I would like to join his group of supporters in congratulating him for what he has already accomplished and encouraging him on to even greater heights.

I hope that all of my colleagues will join me in congratulating Matt and wishing him future successes.

#### CONGRATULATIONS TO LA SIERRA UNIVERSITY ON THEIR 75TH ANNIVERSARY

##### HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an institution in California's 43rd Congressional District that is celebrating a milestone this week. La Sierra University is celebrating 75 years of service to students in the Riverside area, as well as students worldwide. La Sierra University has shown a strong commitment to the education of our community and I would like to especially recognize Lawrence T. Geraty, the university's current president. Mr. Geraty's leadership and dedication will prepare La Sierra University for the transition into the next millennium.

La Sierra first opened in 1922 as La Sierra Academy with 84 students. In 1927, the school became Southern California Junior College, and, in 1939, the school was renamed La Sierra College with the addition of a variety of four-year programs. After merging with Loma Linda University in 1967, La Sierra College became the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University. La Sierra once again became an independent institution in February 1990, assuming its current title as La Sierra University. In the meantime, the professional Schools of Education, Business and Management, and Religion were added.

The campus is currently expanding by developing an additional 350 acres of land. La Sierra University has also added a variety of new programs, including offering a Masters degree in Business Administration and a minor in gender studies, with their curriculum continuing to grow. They were recently chosen by the John Templeton Foundation for its 1997-1998 Honor Roll of Character-Building Colleges. They also recently received an accreditation from the National Association of Schools

of Music for their music department, as well as certification from the Western Association of Colleges and Schools. La Sierra University is also home to the four-time international championship team of students competing in the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE). SIFE is a national organization which is supported by the Walton family, founders of Wal-Mart, that encourages entrepreneurship and community service by students interested in business. SIFE is an instrumental organization on campus, organizing tutoring, recycling and other service programs. In addition to these activities, SIFE has also been involved in several business ventures. As a result, La Sierra University gives students the atmosphere, guidance, and moral foundation needed to succeed in today's competitive job market.

I would like to commend La Sierra University for their commitment to the worldwide scholastic community. Over 1,500 students are currently enrolled, representing more than 60 countries. I encourage and support La Sierra University in continuing to set and meet its outstanding goals in the area of education for decades to come. On behalf of the residents of the 43rd Congressional District, I would like to thank La Sierra University for its contributions and dedicated service to the community, and wish them great success with their 75th anniversary celebration.

#### TRIBUTE TO GRANT R. BRIMHALL

##### HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Grant Brimhall, who is retiring after over three decades of public service.

Marian Wright Edelman once said that "We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily differences we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee." I can think of no better tribute to Grant. Everyday for the past 20 years, he has come into work with the purpose of improving our community. Prior to his position as City Manager of Thousand Oaks, Grant served as City Manager of Glendora and as Deputy City Manager of Claremont.

There is not a single aspect of life in Thousand Oaks that has not been enhanced under Grant's innovative leadership. Community services orchestrated by Grant include the development of the Main Library on Janss Road and Newbury Park Branch, two of the busiest libraries in the nation. His involvement was instrumental in the establishment of the Teen and Senior Center, which provides programs for youth and seniors of the community. Grant's efforts have positively affected our economy as several companies have expanded, along with the upscale commercial revitalization of several shopping centers. Perhaps most impressive among Grant's accomplishments is the fact that Thousand Oaks ranks among the top three cities with the lowest crime rate in the nation on an annual basis.

Grant has worked to improve the aesthetics of our community as well, with a comprehensive pavement management program to prioritize street maintenance programs. Other

priorities included extensive undergrounding of utilities and landscaped medians and parkways.

Taken individually, it is easy to appreciate the work Grant has done for our community, and the programs already mentioned do not begin to scratch the surface of his accomplishments. But as we look back over his twenty years of service to our community, we realize the overwhelming impact Grant has had on our daily lives. Thanks to his leadership, courage and dedication, our community is an ideal place to raise a family, start a business or become involved in community activities.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in honoring retiring City Manager of Thousand Oaks, Grant Brimhall. He will be long remembered for the outstanding services he has provided for the citizens of Los Angeles.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. KEVIN BRADY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. BRADY. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall votes 40, 41, 42 and 43 had I been present I would have voted yes. I was unavoidably detained in Texas as a result of my primary election on Tuesday, March 10th.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. HELEN CHENOWETH

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote 18, final passage of H.R. 424, I was recorded as voting "yea."

I ask that it be reflected in the appropriate place in the RECORD that I wish to be recorded as voting "nay" on this rollcall vote.

#### TRIBUTE TO DANIEL J. WALL

##### HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 11, 1998*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Daniel J. Wall of Sacramento, California, one of California's most effective advocates in the State Capitol. Dan will be leaving the California State Association of Counties (CSAC). On March 16, 1998 after serving that organization for 13 years.

Dan is CSAC's deputy director for Revenue and Taxation and Federal Affairs. He is responsible for advocacy on revenue and taxation issues and for coordinating the Sacramento end of the association's federal efforts. Dan will be leaving CSAC to become the chief advocate for Los Angeles County in Sacramento.

As a former California county supervisor, I had the pleasure of working with Dan on a variety of public finance issues. He displays a level of determination and commitment to county government that few can match. Individuals who work with Dan are impressed with