

Americans who continue to pursue the American dream.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I was necessarily absent during rollcall votes 76, 77, and 78. If present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall vote 76, "aye" on rollcall vote 77, and "no" on rollcall vote 78.

WELCOMING THE NWPC NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE TO NEW JERSEY

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome the National Women's Political Caucus 1998 Spring National Steering Committee (NSC) meeting to Newark, New Jersey. This marks the first time New Jersey has hosted this important event.

The National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC) is the only national, grassroots organization designed to help women from both political parties attain public office. Each year the Caucus trains and supports more than 50,000 women who are seeking elected or appointed government positions.

As Eileen P. Thornton, former WPC-NJ president, has written, "As we look back, it is good to reflect on how far women have come. But looking ahead, it is very important that we understand how far we still have to go to reach our goals."

The National Women's Political Caucus has served as a catalyst for getting women into public office. We can now say that due in part to this organization's efforts we have more women in the House of Representatives than ever before. But the NWPC understands that more must be done.

The organization's National Steering Committee meeting will bring women from across the country to develop strategies to elect more women to federal offices and to make NWPC endorsements. The National Women's Political Caucus National Steering Committee meeting will be held at the Newark Airport Marriott, March 26–28, 1998.

I would like to thank NWPC president Anita Perez Ferguson, WPC-NJ president Paige Berry and former WPC-NJ president Eileen P. Thornton for making this event possible. The political future of the women's movement is safe in their hands.

IN HONOR OF JOSEPH JACOBSON'S 100TH BIRTHDAY

HON. CHARLES E. SCHUMER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in sending warm wishes to

Mr. Joseph Jacobson on the occasion of his 100th birthday.

Mr. Jacobson has been busy this last century it seems. He began his career in the construction industry in 1921, by 1923 he became a member of Local Union #3, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. He has remained an active member, in good standing, for over 75 years. Joseph literally worked his way up through the construction trade, holding a number of positions during his career. Today we see the magnificent projects he had the opportunity to work on, such as, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, Parkchester Housing Complex in the Bronx and the Port Authority Bus Terminal in Manhattan.

Throughout the years, Mr. Jacobson has also found time to dedicate himself to fine causes dear to his heart. For these efforts he has been recognized a number of times by organizations such as the Allied Union Club of Queens, Bronx Acorn Electrical Club, the Bronx Scouting Council and the New York City Central Labor Council. Because of his continued commitment and level of service to the community, the Bronx Acorn Club and the Electrical Square Club have awarded scholarships in his name. One in particular which makes him most proud is the Educational and Cultural Fund of the Electrical Industry which has awarded a scholarship in his name for the past 20 years.

Despite his retirement from the industry, he has remained quite active with his union helping organize retirees. Mr. Jacobson is currently President of the Retirees Association of Local union #3 I.B.E.W. He has also been active with the National Council of Senior Citizens and the New York State Council of Senior Citizens.

I would like to take this time to say that we should not let this birthday be just a celebration of how many years Mr. Jacobson has lived. Rather it should be a celebration of the events that have taken place during these precious years he has been given. Let us measure the life he has lived by the good deeds, by the joy he has shared and brought to others, by the generosity he has bestowed to friend and stranger alike and by the countless ways he has been an inspiration to those who have had the pleasure to meet him.

Happy Birthday, Mr. Jacobson, and I wish you many more.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I was traveling with the President in Africa yesterday, March 26, 1998, and was unable to vote. I would have voted in favor of the Kucinich amendment to H.R. 3310 (Rollcall No. 72). I would have voted against the McIntosh amendment to H.R. 3310 (Rollcall No. 73). I would have voted against H.R. 3310 (Rollcall No. 74). I would have voted against the Solomon amendment H. Res. 385 (Rollcall No. 75). I would have voted against the Dreier resolution H. Res. 393 (Rollcall No. 76). I would have voted against the Goodling amendment to H.R. 3246 (Rollcall No. 77). I would have voted against H.R. 3246 (Rollcall No. 78).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ROD R. BLAGOJEVICH

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, March 26, 1998, on Roll Call 75, the rule for consideration of H.R. 1757, I inadvertently voted aye. I intended to vote no.

"RECOGNIZING VETERAN OLYMPIAN AMY PETERSON"

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to recognize one of my constituents, Amy Peterson, who deserves a standing ovation from our nation for her magnificent achievements as a member of the U.S. Olympic speed skating team. Amy has endured an impressive battle to become the most decorated Olympian in Minnesota history!

Amy is from Maplewood, Minnesota and attended Johnson High School, graduating in 1990. She began competing in the Olympics in the 1990 Albertville Games, taking home a silver medal on the 3000 meter relay team. In 1994, she returned to Lillehammer to take home the bronze medal in the 500-meter race, and another bronze in the relay event.

Amy was diagnosed in 1995 with chronic fatigue syndrome, which severely hindered her energy level and limited her training. As we are all aware, Olympic training requires an intense athletic and mental commitment of no less than 100%. Amy struggled through her condition for 18 months until 1996, all the while training to the best of her abilities. For the first time in years, Amy again felt comfortable on the ice at the Olympic trials in January 1998, enough to win first place in the short-trials in all four of her races. Amy went on to take 4th place in the 500 meter race this year in Nagano, and 5th place with the U.S. Team in the 3000 meter relays.

I personally greatly admire Amy's incredible grit and determination. Amy's life story and experience captures the true meaning of the Olympics, the power of the human spirit demonstrated in this special competition. Amy has proven to the world, and especially to herself, that she can beat the odds to surpass all limits. My congratulations to Amy Peterson for her extraordinary achievements!

EXTENDING THE VISA WAIVER PILOT PROGRAM

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 25, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2578) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to extend the visa waiver pilot program, and to

provide for the collection of data with respect to the number of nonimmigrations who remain in the United States after the expiration of the period of stay authorized by the Attorney General:

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, the issue before us today is not a question of illegal immigration, there is no threat of an impending wave of illegal Greek or Portuguese immigration to the United States.

The question before us is one of fairness. It is a question of doing what is right by two countries who are our allies, our friends and our business partners. It is fair and right to extend the same rights to Greece and Portugal that we do to 25 other nations—the right to enter the U.S. freely for travel and business.

Prior to the passage of the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform Act, Greece and Portugal would have been admitted to the Visa Waiver Program because their visa refusal rates are below three percent.

Concern about illegal immigration is misplaced and fails to recognize that the Greek and Portuguese economies are strong and unemployment rates are among the lowest in Europe—there is little incentive for people to leave their enchanting countries for ours.

Moreover, immigration to the United States from those countries is no greater than U.S. immigration to Greece and Portugal.

Finally, both of these communities have made enormous contributions to our country. In my district, the Portuguese American community has transformed part of New Jersey's great cities—Newark, Elizabeth, and Perth Amboy. And the Greek community's influence has been equally remarkable.

We need to level the playing field and let the Portuguese and Greek people know that the United States welcomes them as tourists and business travelers, as we do their other European counterparts.

CONFIDENCE IN THE FAMILY ACT

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, there now exists a serious defect in our Federal criminal and civil law and procedures that has unfortunately been brought into focus by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's investigation of the President. Under Federal law and the law of most States, children can be compelled to testify against their parents, and parents against their children. Although most prosecutors refrain from subjecting a family to this terrible situation, it can and does occur. I have long believed that parents and their children should be shielded from this trauma, and that doing so would not do significant damage to the administration of justice.

Therefore, today I am introducing a bill, the Confidence in the Family Act, to ensure that parents and children cannot be compelled to testify against one another, and that confidential communications between parents and children will be protected. These privileges would be similar to the privileges provided to spouses under current Federal law, and would be developed by the Federal courts in light of the common law, reason, and experience.

Under current law a mother can be given the choice of providing testimony that reveals

her daughter's most personal confidences, or go to jail herself. A child can be put on the witness stand and forced to reveal personal discussions with his Dad. It does not matter if this testimony relates to the most private confidences that parents and children often share in the course of seeking comfort, support, or advice.

The damage that such an experience can cause parents, children, and familial relationships is readily apparent, and worthy of our concern.

It is not at all clear that forcing parents and children to testify against each other provides great access to truth and justice. When a potential witness is put into such a predicament, they face what legal scholars refer to as the cruel "trilemma." The witness has three choices: they may testify truthfully, they may testify and lie, or they may refuse to testify and risk contempt charges and imprisonment. Among these options, testifying falsely may often be the most appealing. The other choices certainly have serious societal repercussions.

Most jurisdictions recognize privileges for individuals in certain relationships (e.g., husband-wife, lawyer-client, psychiatrist-patient) to refrain from testifying. Surely, the confidences shared between a mother and daughter deserve at least as much respect as those between psychiatrists and patients. I believe that the law should recognize the special nature of the relationship between a parent and child, and that is the basis for this legislation.

I hope that my colleagues will join me in support of this important decision.

PERSIAN GULF VETERANS HEALTH CARE EXTENSION ACT OF 1998 H.R. 3571

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 27, 1998

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to extend the period that Gulf War veterans with undiagnosed illnesses will be able to receive Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) health care. This measure will extend the authority for VA to provide treatment from December 31, 1998 until December 31, 2001. This extension makes the timeline for health care eligibility consistent with the presumptive period the Secretary of Veterans Affairs defined for compensation for disabilities due to undiagnosed illnesses.

More than a year ago, I encouraged VA to extend the presumptive period for compensation because no one could explain why so many veterans had health care problems following their military service in the Persian Gulf. Former VA Secretary Jesse Brown justified the extension of the presumptive period by stating that no one knows why so many veterans are still sick—seven years after serving in the Southwest Asian theater. Of the almost 700,000 individuals who served in the Persian Gulf, about 65,000 veterans have signed onto the VA's Persian Gulf Registry and about 19,000 have registered for DOD's Comprehensive Clinical Evaluation Program. VA's latest Gulf War Veteran's Statistics indicate that, of those veterans on VA's registry, about 11% have undiagnosed illnesses. In re-

sponse to the continuing health care problems reported by these veterans, Congress enacted legislation last year to require VA to develop innovative treatment programs for these veterans and to document the effectiveness of these programs in treating veterans. I believe the large number of veterans still suffering demonstrates the need for continuing to provide VA health care services for undiagnosed illnesses.

The Persian Gulf Veterans Health Care Extension Act of 1998 follows my introduction of H.R. 3279, the Persian Gulf Veterans Act of 1998. H.R. 3279 establishes a permanent process for awarding compensation for conditions presumed to be service-connected by virtue of Gulf War service. It also addresses the need for research in many areas, including defining effective health care treatments for those who have vague or undiagnosed symptoms and investigating emerging technologies to assess exposure to various hazards and agents. The legislation would also require VA and DOD to develop information resources, and mandate VA and DOD to document their outreach programs for veterans and active duty military members.

Our nation must continue to respond to Persian Gulf veterans' need for a complete range of benefits. Veterans still want to know why they are sick, but also need health care that can alleviate their pain and compensation to ensure that the effects of their illnesses do not impoverish them and their families. Continuing VA's authority to deliver health care benefits for conditions resulting from undiagnosed illnesses is critical to ensuring that Persian Gulf veterans get the services they still need. It is essential to continue to provide health care treatment to veterans as we continue to seek answers about the cause of their conditions.

FAIRNESS FOR SMALL BUSINESS AND EMPLOYEES ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. NANCY PELOSI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3246) to assist small businesses and labor organizations in defending themselves against government bureaucracy; to ensure that employees entitled to reinstatement get their jobs back quickly; to protect the right of employers to have a hearing to present their case in certain representation cases; and to prevent the use of the National Labor Relations Act for the purpose of disrupting or inflicting economic harm on employers.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Chairman, I rise in opposition to this legislation, which attempts to silence workers and diminish their ability to stand against discrimination in the workplace.

This bill prevents employees the opportunity to bargain or to protect their rights in the workplace. The bill subjects workers to an unreasonable and unjust test of motivation in order to gain employment, and will intimidate employees into giving up their right to join a union.

We currently have established laws to protect employers from workers performing illegal