

barrels of oil on a market already awash with oversupply.

Congress created the Reserve in 1975 to avoid the devastating effects on our national security and our economy that could be caused by the kind of shortages that occurred when other oil-producing countries stopped producing in order to drive up the price of oil and gas.

Last year, Congress directed the DOE to sell over \$200 million worth of oil—essentially covering the cost of operating the Reserve. But shouldn't we think about the wisdom of proceeding with this plan at this time?

Isn't it foolish to liquidate federal oil reserves now, when oil and gas are selling at very low prices? Even if the price of oil rebounds this year, we would still be selling these federal assets for far less than the \$27 to \$30 per barrel it cost us to acquire them. Secretary of Energy Federico Pena agrees, noting, "This is the worst time to be selling oil out of the Strategic Petroleum Reserve." Good economics would suggest that we buy oil for the Reserve now—not sell it.

On March 26, the Senate accepted an amendment to its supplemental appropriations bill to rescind the sale. The House bill passed earlier this week does not rescind the sale. On behalf of taxpayers who stand to lose millions in this unwise liquidation proceeds, I would hope that the House conferees will accept the Senate position in Conference.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
FRED AND MRS. ANNE ANDERSON

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Honorable Fred and Mrs. Anne Anderson of Loveland, Colorado. Fred and Anne are being honored April 1 by the National Multiple Sclerosis with the 1998 Hope Award at the fourth annual Dinner of Champions. April 1 is a very special anniversary for the couple as this was the date Fred proposed to Anne 44 years ago, so it is especially poignant that the community chose this date to honor this dedicated couple for their volunteer service.

As residents of the community for four decades, and parents of four children, the Andersons have spent an enormous amount of time contributing to the political and local community. To name just some of the organizations they worked for include the Boy Scouts, their children's schools, youth football, church, library, McKee Medical Center, Rotary, Jaycees, PEO, and foundations.

Fred, who served in the Colorado State Senate for 16 years, including a time as Senate President, is well known for his expertise on Colorado water issues. His knowledge has been invaluable to the citizens of the region and state. Anne has served as co-chair of United Way with Fred, and board member of public television's Channel 6. Together, they signed up to work hard for the National MS Society when one of their children, Kate, was diagnosed with the disease, chairing the first Dinner of Champions.

The Andersons are a good example of Americans who are generous and caring.

"They would do anything for any person who needed a hand," said Cindy Bean, development manager for the National MS Society. As a personal friend of the Andersons, I know this statement to be true. Fred and Anne are two people who are working to make this a better world.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1757,
FOREIGN AFFAIRS REFORM AND
RESTRUCTURING ACT OF 1998

SPEECH OF

HON. VINCE SNOWBARGER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 26, 1998

Mr. SNOWBARGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this conference report. The United Nations Reform Act is an important first step in bringing this institution in line with what America expects of it, and achieving the goals of the Kassebaum-Solomon amendment which began our withholding of a portion of our U.N. dues. Last year, I introduced the United Nations Accountability Act to force reforms at the U.N. before any arrears could be paid to that body. This measure would go far in accomplishing that goal by providing the funds in three tranches, but payment of each tranche would be contingent on certain specified reforms accomplished at the United Nations.

The U.S.'s dues assessment must be lowered from the current 25 percent to 22 percent immediately, and to 20 percent by the year 2000. For too long, the U.S. has been paying a disproportionate share of the U.N.'s expenses, and other countries have been getting off without paying their fair share.

The bill also requires that our assessment for peacekeeping activities be reduced to 25 percent, and most importantly that our in-kind military contributions to U.N. peacekeeping missions be credited against our assessment. Last year I supported an amendment by the gentleman from Maryland—Mr. BARTLETT—to require money we spent in the past for this purpose be applied to our arrearage. Unfortunately, a majority of the House opposed that effort. I can understand why—the Administration promised and the Congress appropriated this money without first demanding reimbursement, and it would be difficult to retroactively correct that foolish mistake. But we must make sure that we get compensation in the future. Administration officials and Members of Congress must remember that it is not our money they are promising to Kofi Annan, it belongs to the people of this country, and they deserve full value for it.

There are other important institutional reforms in this bill that deserve our support. There are procurement reforms that ensure that contracts will be let fairly and openly and not to the friends of the U.N. officials awarding them. There will finally be a merit-based personnel system at the U.N. to end the rampant cronyism there. The United States—as the largest contributor to the U.N.—will be ensured of a seat on the U.N.'s budget committee. The bloated staffing levels will be cut. And a report will be required on efforts to ensure that our ally Israel has the same opportunity to serve on the Security Council as every other member state.

Now that the reforms have been required by Congress, the next step must be enforcing

them. I must say that I would have preferred the enforcement procedure of the United Nations Accountability Act—requiring a second vote by Congress to approve the reforms. Instead the Administration has to certify that the U.N. has indeed made the required reforms—not just making progress, but actually accomplishing them. Congress now has the duty to keep both U.N. and the Administration honest. I will do my best to do so, and if any certification is made that is in conflict with the facts, I will lead the effort to block further appropriations.

THE DISABLED VETERANS' SPECIAL
HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS
ACT OF 1998—H.R. 3619

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing the Disabled Veterans' Special Housing Improvements Act of 1998. This legislation will provide our most severely disabled veterans with a much needed increase in the amount of the one-time grant they may receive in order to obtain or adapt special housing to meet their unique needs. Only a small number of service-connected veterans are so disabled that they qualify to receive a grant to obtain suitable housing. Most are required to use a wheelchair for mobility. During the past ten years, the purchasing power of this grant has been allowed to erode by almost one-third.

The Disabled Veterans' Special Housing Improvements Act of 1998 was prompted by a call to my office from a severely disabled veteran. This veteran reported that while he had been approved for a one-time grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs to modify his home to meet the requirements of his service-connected disabilities, the cost of the needed adaptations far exceeded the amount of the grant. There was a simple reason for this fact. The grant amount for veterans which had been regularly increased between 1969 and 1988 has been frozen since 1988.

The grant available under this program amount is limited to 50% of the actual cost of the modifications or purchase. Nonetheless, almost 95% of the veterans who qualify for this benefit receive the maximum grant. The legislation I am introducing today makes up for years of neglect. It will restore the purchasing power of the grant to reflect the current cost of housing. In order to avoid repeating the neglect of the past ten years, the legislation will also index the grant to the cost of new construction in future years.

In addition, this legislation has been recommended by the Independent Budget and the many veterans service organizations who participate in preparing that document. Our most severely disabled veterans have earned the right to live in a safe, secure home, specially adapted to meet their needs. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HONORING NATIONAL COMMUNITY
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DAY**HON. KEN BENTSEN**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize National Community Economic Development Day (National CED Day), which will be celebrated by community development corporations (CDCs) across the country on Wednesday, April 8, 1998.

This third annual event, held during National Community Development Week and sponsored by the National Congress for Community Development (NCCED), recognizes the achievements of more than 2,500 CDCs working in America's low-income urban and rural communities. More than 800 NCCED members are actively involved in housing renovation and construction, real estate development, industrial and small business development, employment-generating activities, and other innovative programs to revitalize communities. More than 21 million people benefit from the work of CDCs.

This year's National CED Day theme, Community Empowerment Through Partnerships, underscores the benefits of building effective alliances between community and faith-based organizations, businesses, and state, local, and federal governments. Collectively, these partnerships work to foster a better social and economic quality of life for America's families. National CED Day gives CDCs the chance to form and expand productive partnerships with local businesses, corporations, banks, academic institutions and public officials, which strengthens the economic base of both urban and rural communities nationwide.

Community Development Corporations are good at what they do around the country and in Houston. They recognize the interrelated factors that cause economic decline. They evaluate the needs of each community and create plans for each neighborhood. They then develop comprehensive strategies for community economic development using entrepreneurial solutions, and they stay in the community for the long term.

Effective community development depends on all of us working together, developing and sharing good ideas, and bringing individual talents and resources to bear addressing the economic challenges facing our families and our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I commend all involved with National Community Economic Development Day and the good work that CDCs have done in Houston and around the country. I look forward to continuing to work together in this crucial effort.

1998 EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATIONS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 31, 1998

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R.

3579) making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes:

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, the House Report accompanying the Supplemental Appropriations bill contains a little-noticed section that could cost taxpayers many millions of dollars in revenues from public lands in the Gulf of Mexico.

Technological advances in recent years have made it much cheaper to find and produce oil and gas in what was formerly considered "deep water" in the Gulf. In 1995, the Congress unwisely passed a Deepwater Royalty "holiday" to stimulate oil companies (most of whom were already enormously interested in deep water leases) to bid on these tracts. Here's how Congress provided that incentive: instead of charging royalties on oil and gas produced from these new leases, the oil companies would be given as much as 87.5 million barrels absolutely free! We have given away hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars in royalties from leases on public lands that the oil industry was already clamoring to bid on. It came as little surprise that companies are snapping up the royalty-free leases and paying higher than normal front end bonuses to acquire them. Why wouldn't you pay more if you know you will get nearly 100 million barrels of production royalty-free?

Thanks to improved technology and cheaper production costs, oil exploration and production in the Gulf are booming. As reported in Forbes magazine last year, Gulf of Mexico deepwater development costs have dropped to as little as \$3 per barrel, one-third the level in 1987.

This is great news for the oil industry, but might not be quite so good a bargain for the taxpayers who own the oil and gas. The Minerals Management Service, which oversees offshore production, wants to look at possibly raising the royalty rates on the holiday leases once royalties do begin to apply in an effort to determine whether or not the public is actually receiving fair market value on its oil and gas. MMS is fully allowed to take such corrective action under the 1995 law that gave away the leases royalty-free.

But the oil industry, enjoying the benefits of the 1995 law and flush with money from Gulf leases, now wants to curtail the government's legal right to make adjustments to ensure the public's financial interest is fully protected. The House Appropriations Committee's Report on the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill includes language to prevent the Secretary of the Interior from making any changes to the lease terms. This language undermines the Secretary's authority to set terms that guarantee the taxpayer receives fair market value on the sale of its mineral resources.

Congress should be protecting the public's right to receive a fair return—not tying the hands of the Interior Department when it is attempting to secure fair market value for the taxpayers. This Report language is irrelevant to the Emergency Supplemental and, by revising the authority granted Interior in the 1995 law, constitutes an indirect effort to legislate on an appropriations bill.

I would hope such instructions are not included in the Conference Report or the Statement of Managers. And I would recommend that Members oppose the Conference Report should it be included. If the weakening rec-

ommendation is in the Statement, the MMS should ignore this unwise effort to tamper with the law and shortchange taxpayers.

TRIBUTE TO PHIL WALKER

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Phil Walker, a Fort Collins, Colorado, native and 40-year broadcaster for KCOL radio who has just been recognized as the Colorado Broadcasters Association Broadcast Citizen of the Year.

This annual award is given to an individual who displays an outstanding record of community citizenship. Phil was selected for his tremendous service during Fort Collins' 1997 devastating flood when he stayed on the air non-stop for four days, broadcasting relief coverage and directing emergency assistance.

However, Phil has been known to our community and his listeners long before last summer's flood. He started work at KCOL as a freshman at Fort Collins High School in 1957. Today, we start our weekday mornings at 6:00 a.m., hearing, "Good morning everyone! How's my city? on News Talk 1410 AM, Monday through Friday. What better way to wake up than to hear this cheerful greeting emanating from a man who loves and knows his city, my hometown.

Phil has been recognized as a visionary who constantly thinks about Fort Collins' future, but he also airs a very popular radio feature about the 200-year history of Fort Collins and northern Colorado, known as "Visions Along the Poudre." As he proudly states, "This is my home town," obviously giving him great insight and knowledge of the area.

Phil has won numerous awards during his career including Best Regularly Scheduled Newscast by the Colorado Broadcasters Association in 1996; Best Broadcast Feature Writer in Colorado by the Society of Professional Journalists in 1994; and Best Radio Program in Colorado by the Broadcasters Association in 1980-83, 1989, and 1991-96; was chosen as the "Best Local Author" in the annual Coloradoan poll four years in a row for "Visions Along the Poudre Valley;" President's Award by the Fort Collins Historical Society in 1996; and this year, was chosen as the Honorary Historian for Larimer County by the Larimer County Commissioners.

His community involvement is extensive as well, including being the founding member of the NewWestFest committee; creator of the Annual community Carolfest held during Christmas; administrator of the town's 4th of July fireworks display for 15 years; established a fundraising program for the Fort Collins Museum; master of ceremonies for many charitable events; and was recently the Honorary Chairman of Riverfest, the annual celebration of the Poudre River.

Recalling a conversation he had with his father as a youngster, he asked his dad, "Why are you doing all this volunteer work? You don't get paid for doing it?"

His dad responded, "Well, it's my turn." Phil asked, "What does that mean," to which his dad said, "If you keep your nose clean and live in this town for about forty more years, you'll know what it means."