

time and talents to making this vision a reality. Each week, a guest reader volunteers one hour a day to read stories to the primary students. Classroom presentations have also been a strong contribution by the independent. Writers and advertisers provide "hands on" newspaper activities illustrating their job responsibilities at the Independent. Students are taught to see the correlation between mathematical application and advertising sizing and pricing. The Clovis Independent promotes student recognition by printing students of the month, honor students, those receiving special awards, and special interest stories.

The David & Sons-Viking Elementary School partnership is another excellent example of the impact individual employees have on students. Employees participate in field trips, student of the month activities, classroom tutoring and a number of other activities that result in one-on-one contact with kids. As a business, David & Sons is also an important player in the Viking Pen Pal Program. The kids love the letters they receive from the employees. In addition to extensive involvement from employees, David & Sons also contributes financially to after school activities that touch the families as well as the children.

Ericson Elementary School of Fresno is in its second year of an exciting partnership with the Claude Laval Corporation. The primary goal of the partnership is to expose children to an array of career possibilities. Division heads from the Claude Laval Corporation do classroom presentations which often include hands on demonstrations. These department heads talk to kids not only about the intricacies of the industry but about the importance of work ethics, goal setting, and life long learning. Perhaps the most innovative aspect of this process is the interview/resume process. Each student who completes the packet goes to a mock interview, and as a culminating activity, four students are selected to attend a Claude Laval Leadership Training Program which includes a factory tour and lunch with Claude Laval executives. At the end of the year, classrooms prepare presentations on topics such as marketing, finance and manufacturing and present them to the executive team at Claude Laval.

In Clovis, Tarpey Elementary School and Costco have cultivated a partnership that families, as well as students have benefited from. Costco has donated back packs and school supplies to over 1,000 students. Needy families have been the recipients of food and clothing. The annual Tarpey BBQ and carnival has become one the community highlights as a result of Costco's generous donation of food and supplies.

The final business partner award goes to a long standing business partnership and an icon in the community. Producers Dairy was nominated by the State Center Community College District for their contributions to the State Center system for over a decade. Producers is sole sponsor of the "Producers California Community College Baseball State Championships." This event not only touches college athletes but brings thousands of dollars into the Fresno Community. Producers Dairy also provides over \$20,000 in scholarships to students who might not otherwise have the means to go to college.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great honor that I pay tribute to Harris Ranch, Giannini Packaging Corporation, WestAmerica Bank, Evangelical

Free Church, Dumont Printing, The Clovis Independent, David and Sons, Claude Laval Corporation, Costco Wholesale, and Producers Dairy for the dedication and care that they have exhibited for future education. School business partnerships bring a little bit of hope to a lot of kids, thanks to the commitment of powerful teachers and concerned and dedicated citizens. I ask my colleagues to join me in wishing these companies many more years of success.

INTRODUCTION OF A BILL TO AMEND THE 50 STATES COMMEMORATIVE COIN PROGRAM ACT

HON. CARLOS ROMERO-BARCELÓ

OF PUERTO RICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, today we have introduced a bill to amend the 50 States Commemorative Coin Program Act that will extend the program by one additional year so as to include the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam and the United States Virgin Islands within the scope of the program.

The 50 States Commemorative Coin Program, to begin in 1999, allows each of the 50 States the privilege of selecting a design for the reverse side of the quarter coin that commemorates their history. Five States per year will have quarters minted, selected according to the order in which the States ratified the Constitution or were admitted into the Union.

As enacted, the Territories and the District of Columbia were excluded from the original program. This amendment is necessary because as passed, the Act does not truly reflect the strengths of our Nation and the tremendous contributions to American society and American democratic values provided by the United States citizens who reside in the Territories and in the District of Columbia. It is important that the youth of the United States, a large number of whom are expected to collect complete sets of the quarter dollars issued during the program, learn about their national history, geography and heritage.

We supported the program (H.R. 2414) on the House floor last September after it was agreed that we would be included in a subsequent bill. I wish to salute the chairman of the Domestic and International Monetary Policy Subcommittee, MICHAEL CASTLE (R-DEL), for his support and commitment to ensure that we receive the same considerations as all 50 states.

In addition, I wish to thank delegate ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON, of the District of Columbia and my colleagues representing each of the territories. I am glad that we could work together to achieve this important victory towards equality.

THE FIFTY STATE COMMEMORATIVE COIN PROGRAM ACT

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduce a bill that would give the District of Co-

lumbia and the four insular areas a privilege the 50 states already have, namely, the ability to choose a design for the reverse side of the quarter coin in order to commemorate our history as part of the United States. After I protested the exclusion of D.C. and the four territories when the original bill came to the House Floor, Congressman MIKE CASTLE, Chair of the Domestic and International Monetary Policy Subcommittee, agreed to co-sponsor this bill with the other Delegates and me and to allow the District and the four insular areas to participate. I want to thank Chairman Castle for his great cooperation in helping us with this effort that is important to our districts, and I thank the Delegates from the four insular areas who have worked hard on this bill from the beginning.

Although the residents of the District and the insular areas are American citizens, there are some differences between us and the states. However, qualification to be part of a program to redesign quarters to commemorate Member's home districts is not one of them. There is no legal or constitutional reason to exclude D.C. and the territories from this bill. Congress should be at great pains to avoid any appearance of treating the District and the insular areas as colonies. I am sure this initial exclusion was an oversight.

My bill would extend the 10-year commemorative coin program for an additional year to include the District of Columbia and the four insular areas—American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands—in the program. In the District, I am suggesting that we hold a competition to choose the design for our quarter. Although to some American citizens the Commemorative Coin Program may seem like a minor activity, the ability to participate in this program is important recognition to my constituents. I am sure that the same is true for the insular areas.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3633, THE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TRAFFICKING PROHIBITION ACT OF 1998

HON. STEVE CHABOT

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, serious concerns have been raised by law enforcement, US Customs, drug abuse prevention counselors and commissions, independent studies and media reports about the trafficking of controlled substances from Mexico.

"Controlled substances" are drugs that the Drug Enforcement Administration has either banned or subjected to closely regulated status because of their danger, addictiveness and potential for abuse. Controlled substances include illegal drugs such as heroin and closely-regulated legal drugs such as Valium.

Currently, it is particularly easy for an individual to purchase dangerous controlled substances in Mexico. These uppers, downers, hallucinogens, and "date-rape drugs" are obtained from so-called "health-care providers" or "pharmacists" in Mexico with no documentation of medical need; then legally imported into the United States; and, according to DEA, frequently sold illegally on the street.

Mexican drug sellers even include detailed instructions to help Americans avoid arrest or

drug confiscation—these instructions tell Americans:

"Don't use marijuana or cocaine for 2 days before because dogs may smell."

"Don't open boxes in Mexico."

"Customs and Border Patrol don't care about medication."

"Medication must be used only in U.S.A. not in Mexico."

Ironically, while Mexican authorities don't mind supplying dangerous drugs to American citizens, they strictly prohibit their use in Mexico. In fact, there have been high-profile cases where U.S. citizens have been arrested for opening sealed boxes of controlled substances while still on Mexican soil.

This gaping hole in U.S. drug policy exists because of a so-called "personal use" exemption to the Controlled Substances Act that allows American drug dealers to bring in up to a 90 day supply of such drugs without a legitimate prescription or medical purpose, as long as they are declared at the border. This exemption is so lax that studies along the southwest border have found records of people bringing in thousands of pills in one day—multiple drugs and thousands of pills in a single day for "personal use."

A 1996 study published in *Clinical Therapeutics*, entitled *Pharmaceutical Products Declared by US Residents on Returning to the United States from Mexico* by McKeithan and Shepherd raises serious concerns about the trafficking of controlled substances along the U.S.-Mexico border. The number and types of pills that the Shepherd study found at a typical border crossing backup DEA's view that these drugs are being used for illegal purposes.

The Shepherd study estimated that in just one year at the Laredo border crossing, over 60,000 drug products were brought in to the U.S. by more than 24,000 people. All of the top 15 drug products, which represent 94.1 percent of the total quantity of declared drugs, were controlled substances. These dangerous drugs, classified as prescription tranquilizers, stimulants, and narcotic analgesics, are potentially addictive and subject to abuse.

Specifically, Valium was declared by 70 percent of the people, with the average person bringing in 237 tablets. Rohypnol, commonly referred to as the "date-rape drug," was brought in by 43 percent of those who declared their prescription medication. Over a full year, that means that over 4 million doses of Valium and almost 1.5 million doses of Rohypnol were brought in at a single border crossing. Further, the median age for those who declared Valium and Rohypnol was 24 and 26 years old respectively.

Fortunately, Rohypnol, which is ten times more potent than Valium, has recently been banned for importation into the U.S. Unfortunately, there are hundreds of dangerous controlled substances, readily available in Mexico, that pose similar threats to American citizens.

This blatant perversion of our nation's drug laws must be stopped. The personal use exemption should allow American citizens who become injured or ill while traveling abroad to bring needed medicine back into the United States—it was never intended to allow drug dealers to legally import large quantities of hazardous, mind-altering drugs into our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I have been working with Customs, DEA, and the Office of National Drug Control Policy to solve this problem. The legis-

lation I have proposed offers a targeted and straight-forward solution to this problem.

My proposal would limit the exemption for individuals who do not possess a prescription issued by a U.S. physician or documentation which verifies a legitimate prescription. An individual without this documentation would be limited to 50 dosage units of a controlled substance. The 50 dose limit would provide those people who have a legitimate need for a controlled substance ample time to seek medical attention in the U.S. while virtually eliminating the abuses that are now prevalent along the U.S. border.

I want to be very clear about what this legislation does and does not do:

The legislation is strictly limited to controlled substances. Again, controlled substances are drugs that the DEA has either banned or subjected to closely regulated status because of their danger, addictiveness and potential for abuse.

The legislation is strictly limited to those individuals that do not possess a U.S. prescription or documentation that a prescription exists. The legislation does not impact the ability of people with a prescription issued by a U.S. doctor to import any medications, including controlled substances.

The legislation does not in any way change current U.S. law as it relates to the importation of prescription drugs that are not considered controlled substances. In other words, this legislation will not make it more difficult for people to obtain drugs to treat heart disease, cancer, AIDS or other serious illnesses, because these drugs are not controlled substances. In fact, none of the top 20 heart, cancer or AIDS drugs are controlled substances.

I would also like to note that although this problem occurs primarily along the Mexico border, it impacts communities well beyond the southwest. The study in Laredo found that residents from 39 states crossed the border and returned to the United States with a variety of drug products in large quantities.

Mr. Speaker, this should not be a controversial proposal. DEA and Customs identified this as a critical problem over two years ago. General McCaffery has written to me and expressed his belief that there is general agreement among my office, ONDCP, DEA, and Customs regarding the scope of the problem and the proposed solution.

Members of this House recognize that prescription drug abuse is a serious problem in this country, and a growing problem among our youth. The purity and low price of prescription pills makes them an attractive alternative to street drugs.

More Americans abuse prescription drugs for non-medical purposes than use heroin, crack and cocaine. Surprisingly, prescription painkillers, sedatives, stimulants, and tranquilizers account for 75 percent of the top 20 drugs mentioned in emergency room episodes in 1995.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue that must be addressed, and I appreciate the leadership of Mr. McCOLLUM, the Chairman of the Crime Subcommittee, and the other supporters of this legislation on this important issue.

THE TELEPHONE EXCISE TAX REPEAL BILL

HON. W.J. (BILLY) TAUZIN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of the Telephone Excise Tax Repeal bill.

Members of the House—if there is one thing that we politicians are experts on, it is talking. Talking on the telephone is not a fit subject for taxes. My word, if there is at least one thing an American ought to be able to do for free—without paying a tax to the Government—it is talking. It is time to repeal the tax on talking.

Under current law, Americans who use local telephone service, toll telephone service, or teletypewriter exchange service—in short, just about every American who uses a telephone—pays an excise tax for using that telephone service. The law requires the phone companies to figure out your phone bill, and then tack on an extra 3 percent to the bill. The Federal Government takes the 3 percent. You can go look at your monthly phone bill, and—right there—you will see what the Federal Government has taken from you because you used your telephone.

For all of you who have advocated higher taxes on tobacco as a public health measure, you ought to be amazed that—here in the land of free speech and the hallowed First Amendment—we tax talking on the telephone more than we tax tobacco. I suppose that means that Congress thinks talking is a greater risk to the public than smoking.

Americans should not have to pay a tax to the Federal Government for the privilege of calling their neighbors to chat, or of talking to Mom on Mother's Day or Dad on Father's Day. Our businesses and their customers should be able to talk to each other without sending money to the Federal Government because of it. Telephone service in America today is a basic necessity, a part of daily life.

Congress knows the phone tax is an unreasonable tax. It started out as a war tax many, many decades ago. Maybe it made sense at the time, but it doesn't any more. Congress knows this is a dumb tax, and that's why Congress has voted to repeal it several times before. Congress enacted a law that established a schedule for this tax to expire in the 1970's. But the Federal Government later wanted more revenue so it changed the law and kept the tax. In the 1980's, Congress again passed a law that provided for this tax to expire, and again thereafter changed the law because the Federal Government wanted more revenue. Yet again, Congress passed a law scheduling this tax to expire in the 1990's, but then changed the law to keep the tax. Congress knows this is a bad tax—that's why it has voted to repeal this tax so many times, just to let it live when a quick fix of revenue was needed to float a huge deficit.

It is time to bury this phone tax once and for all. By repealing this tax, we put the money of Americans back into the pockets of Americans—every American who uses a telephone. We eliminate a highly regressive tax that hits lower-income people proportionately harder than others.

For every American who uses a telephone, this legislation cuts your taxes and cuts your phone bill.