Americans. At the time the first European settlers arrived, it was inhabited primarily by Cherokee Indian tribes, whose artifacts still line the shores of the Etowah River.

Following its settlement, Emerson began to grow into a community built on nearby rail lines; rich agricultural lands; and near iron, graphite, and gold deposits. During the Civil War, the area in and around Emerson was crossed by numerous military forces as Sherman began his infamous drive toward the sea.

Returning war veterans found their homes near Emerson in desolation. Fortunately, the people had a spirit that could not be conquered. They began work rebuilding their town, and succeeded in having it incorporated in 1889.

That spirit of community and growth continues in Emerson today, as the town continues to expand to accommodate growth near metro Atlanta, while retaining its picturesque small town character. I join the citizens of Emerson in saluting their city as it passes an important milestone and moves into a new City Hall.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SUSAN CHASSON

HON. CHRIS CANNON

OF UTAH

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. CANNON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Susan Chasson, a woman of great compassion. This afternoon Ms. Chasson will be awarded the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Community Health Leadership Program Award. As a nurse and a victims' advocate, Ms. Chasson was able to see that the system for assisting children who are victims of abuse was not working, and that the system itself often caused more trauma to the child than it helped. Susan acted on this and returned to school to obtain a law degree so that she could have a greater impact on the system.

In 1991, Ms. Chasson founded the Children's Justice Center in Provo, Utah to help children who are victims of physical abuse and sexual assault. The Center provides these children with a homelike environment where they can tell their stories and begin the healing process. Their staff currently serves over 1,200 victims annually. The Center also provides medical exams for the children and mental health services for both the children and their families, all of whom are victims.

Susan Chasson's dedication and perseverance in breaking through the silence of child abuse reminds us that one person's idea can make all the difference in the world. While it is disappointing that child abuse remains an issue in the 21st Century, Susan Chasson's vision and endeavors must be commended. She is truly a hero for us all.

THE NURSING CRISIS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call your attention to a growing crisis—the shortage of nurses in health care facilities across the Nation. Nurses are an absolutely essential component of our health care system—no piece of medical equipment will ever replace the around-the-clock surveillance provided by our Nation's nurses. There is simply no substitute for the element of humanity that nurses bring to medicine. Therefore, I find it extremely alarming that one in five nurses plans to quit the profession within five years due to unsatisfactory working conditions. By the year 2008, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that we will need 450,000 additional registered nurses in order to meet present demand. This projection neglects the fact that around that same time, 78 million baby boomers Will start becoming eligible for Medicare.

How did we end up in this situation? Imagine for a moment, if you will, that you are one of the millions of young people across the country trying to decide upon a career. Suppose nursing is a profession that sincerely interests you. Would you still be interested upon discovering that nurses can expect to work nights, weekends, and holidays? Would you still be interested after learning that nurses routinely work 16-hour shifts or longer, and can be forced under threat of dismissal to work mandatory overtime? Would you still be interested after realizing that nurses receive lower salaries, less vacation, and less retirement benefits than their classmates who chose other professions? Would you still be interested after finding out that, with the advent of managed care, nurses now have to spend almost as much time scrambling to fill out paperwork as they do caring for patients? Would you still be interested when you learn that the very real possibility exists that you may be the only hospital staff member available to supervise the well-being of an entire floor of critically-ill patients? It doesn't take a great deal of insight to realize that no matter how passionate your intentions, the disadvantages of the nursing profession have become increasingly prohibitive.

Yet, as bad as the nursing crisis is for nurses, its worst consequences will be felt by patients, Last year, an investigative report by the Chicago Tribune revealed that since 1995, at least 1,720 hospital patients have been accidentally killed, and 9,854 others injured as a result of the actions of registered nurses across the country. Interestingly enough, instead of attacking the Tribune report, nurses applauded it because it proved to the American public what they had known for a long time—our nation's nursing corps is being stretched too thin, in part due to reckless pennypinching by managed care companies, and in part due to government underfunding of hospitals.

How bad is the crisis? In the mid-90's, short-sighted budget cuts, both by the government and by managed care companies, forced many hospitals that were staffed entirely by registered nurses to rely on lesser-trained practical nurses and nurse aides instead. Nurse aides, many of whom are not required to have high school diplomas, now constitute over one-third of nursing staffs in many hospitals. In my hometown of Chicago, the situation is so dire that housekeeping staff hired to clean rooms have been pressed into duty as aides to dispense medicine. Hospitals now routinely order nurses to care for 15 patients or more at a time, almost double the recommended patient load. Overworked nurses are being forced to juggle more tasks than any single person can be expected to handle, and are being asked to do procedures that they haven't been adequately trained for.

Our nurses have reached the end of their rope. To quote Kim Cloninger, a registered nurse from Illinois: ''I wake up every day and hope I don't kill someone today. Every day I pray: God protect me. Let me make it out of there with my patients alive.'' Or perhaps more tellingly, Tricia Hunter, executive director of the California branch of the American Nurses Association states: ''I don't know a nurse who would leave anyone they love in a hospital alone.''

Mr. Speaker, this is the face of nursing today. The nursing profession needs our help. As a profession, nurses have a rich history of doing whatever it takes to provide adequate patient care. Nurses generally don't make a big fuss over working conditions. The fact that they are tells me that something is seriously wrong with our health care system today. Therefore, I support legislation that enacts upwardly adjustable nurse staffing ratios as a condition of participation in Medicare and Medicaid, and I support legislation banning mandatory overtime. I also support the Patients' Bill of Rights introduced by Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. EDWARDS, and Mr. KENNEDY in the Senate, and by Mr. GANSKE and Mr. DINGELL in the House because it includes a provision that protects health care professionals from retaliation when they speak out for their patients. Lastly, I support the Nurse Reinvestment Act, H.R. 1436, because it addresses the need to attract more people into the nursing profession. I support all of these measures because if we don't act to solve our current nursing crisis, we will all pay the price at some point down the line.

IN HONOR OF ANDREW KIM

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 28, 2001

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Andrew Kim on the occasion of his installation as president of the almost half million member Korean American Association of Greater New York and the obstacles that he had to overcome to attain such a prestigious position.

Mr. Kim has overcome many personal obstacles that others might have stumbled upon. Contracting Polio in his native Republic of South Korea, Mr. Kim was stigmatized and labeled as ''unlucky.'' In fact, Mr. Kim is self-educated because he chose to cut short his formal education as he saw it as a burden to his parents. Mr. Kim was also denied employment because of his disability and therefore found himself with a unique opportunity to found his own electronic repair shop. Mr. Kim, fascinated with America, studied for a test that would allow him to immigrate and have a job.

Mr. Kim is a firm believer in the American dream. America offered Andrew Kim a fresh start away from the cultural attitudes of South Korea. Mr. Kim worked his way up in New York going from job to job.

Mr. Kim is also a devoted husband and father. He married his wife Theresa two years after coming to America. Together they have three children.