

I would like to take this opportunity to applaud the students and faculty of Todd Lane Elementary as well the residents of Center Township who have donated year after year. Without you, Give-a-Christmas would not be possible. Your contributions have not gone unnoticed. Also a special thanks to Todd Lane's program coordinators: Larry Deep, Paul DeFilippi, Peggy Coladonato, Cindy Halsac, Kathy Fouse, and Principal Zigerelli. They should all be commended for their outstanding efforts.

On behalf of the thousands of families who have been fed, clothed and provided with Christmas gifts, I stand before my fellow members of Congress and thank you for a job well done. You have demonstrated the true meaning of the holiday season.

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COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO'S 75th ANNIVERSARY

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HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring attention to the outstanding achievements of the College of San Mateo and congratulate the institution on its 75th anniversary. As one of the leading community colleges in California, I have the pleasure of having this college in my district.

Founded in 1922 as the first community college on the Bay Area Peninsula, the College of San Mateo rose to meet the needs of the community. As the cost of universities rose, educators in San Mateo saw the need to provide education for those who could not afford 4 year universities. The College of San Mateo acted as a bridge to the University of California and Stanford when higher education became increasingly more important. Here, students could save money and still receive a high quality education.

The College of San Mateo never stopped serving the community. When World War II struck, the college became the top support center in northern California. As Dean Morris stated:

If the need was to have remedial courses, then there would be remedial courses. If a trade school was needed, then trade school classes would be provided. If the community requested adult education, then an adult school would be formed.

The college became an invaluable asset to the community and a most valuable tool for the economic future of the region.

Hundreds of thousands of students have been educated by the College of San Mateo since its founding 75 years ago. The college has helped start two other community colleges in the county and has been the only community college in northern California to sustain both a television and radio station.

As the college of San Mateo approaches the 21st century, the outlook of the community is very bright. For those student that are unable to attend 4 year institutions, this college is an equal alternative. I am proud to acknowledge the outstanding job the College of San Mateo has done educating our community for the past 75 years and will continue into the next century.

INTRODUCING THE ATOMIC VETERANS MEDAL ACT

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HON. BILL RICHARDSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that will award a medal for the service of America's atomic veterans.

My bill will recognize the sacrifice that these long forgotten veterans gave to their country. These soldiers were placed in harm's way by their country, and in many cases they were unaware of the dangers they faced. Many of these veterans have suffered severe health problems due to the radiation exposure they suffered during their service. Recognizing these veterans with a medal that signifies their extraordinary contribution to our national defense is the right thing for America to do.

I hope that you will join me in working to pass this bill in the 105th Congress and give long overdue recognition to these brave Americans.

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TRIBUTE TO JOHN E. KOBARA

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HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine work and outstanding public service of John E. Kobara, the departing associate vice chancellor of university relations at UCLA. For the last 20 years, John has been leading and managing diverse, complex, and innovative organizations with close ties to the higher education community.

John is a graduate of UCLA where he received his BA in political science and sociology before going on to earn an MA in urban studies at Occidental College, and an MBA in marketing and finance at the University of Southern California. As an undergraduate he served on the Undergraduate Student Association, the student body of UCLA, demonstrating an early thirst for involvement in the affairs of the campus and an abiding concern for its welfare. These traits, coupled with his love of UCLA, would become landmarks of his professional career with the university. John is deeply committed to the realm of education and to addressing the issues of diversity and multiculturalism in education and in society at large.

As associate vice chancellor for university relations at UCLA, John has served as the chief external relations officer for the institution, overseeing the public relations, alumni relations, campus-wide marketing, government affairs and special events, and protocol offices. Bringing tremendous vision to this role, he has been instrumental in UCLA's embrace of advanced information technology in its external affairs programs, and in guiding the university onto its present course as a leader on the information superhighway. Prior to serving in this role, John served as executive director of the UCLA Alumni Association. His multifaceted career has also included positions as vice president and general manager of a cable television station, president of a theater, and president of a trade association.

John is a masterful communicator, highly regarded for his ability to further mutually respected relationships between and among communities. Committed to empowering others to recognize and actualize their full potential, John delivers dozens of presentations each year on career change, technology, networking, personal growth and empowerment. A Coro alumnus with an extensive record of community involvement, he serves on boards of the Coro Foundation, the East West Players, the Rose Bowl Operating Co., the Asian Pacific Women's Center, and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, John's wife, Sarah, and his three children, in recognizing the many important contributions of this remarkable man. For his many year of dedicated service, it is only appropriate that the House recognize John Kobara today.

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HEALTH INSURANCE ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE 55 AND OLDER

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HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, in the 104th Congress, I introduced legislation to provide assistance in obtaining health insurance to those 55 and older. Today, I rise again to introduce the same legislation to make the COBRA health continuation program available to anyone between age 55 and the time they become eligible for Medicare.

The 1990's have confronted us with many difficult issues, both foreign and domestic. One issue in particular impacts an everincreasing segment of our population. According to statistics from the Department of Labor, in 1988, there were 13.1 million private sector retirees and 4.9 million had health insurance coverage. In 1994, the number of private sector retirees had risen to 17.4 million but the number of individuals covered by health insurance had declined to 4.7 million. In other words, the proportion of private sector retirees covered by health insurance from a former employer dropped from 37 percent in 1988 to 27 percent in 1994.

As the level of employer-provided insurance declines and as hundreds of thousands of older workers face early retirement because of corporate down-fixing, layoffs, and restructuring, the problem of health insurance for those not-yet-eligible for Medicare is becoming more and more serious.

As Corporate America continues to focus on profit levels, often at the expense of providing health insurance benefits to workers, these individuals face an uncertain and frightening future in the health care arena. The steady decline in coverage among active workers translates into lower likelihood of retiree health benefits being available.

The frightening reality of this situation will only get worse. In 1994, almost 24 percent of retirees—4.1 million, were between the ages of 55 and 64. The pressure on retiree health plans will only increase as the number of persons over the age of 55 nearly doubles—from 55 million today to nearly 100 million—by the year 2020.