

course I have been touched with this in my own family, as the gentleman had mentioned.

I want to thank the gentleman for his interest and for allowing me a few minutes to align myself and associate myself with the gentleman's interests in battling this terrible disease.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I would like to recognize my other colleagues from Long Island: the gentleman from New York [Mr. ACKERMAN], the gentleman from New York [Mr. KING], and the gentlewoman from New York [Mrs. McCARTHY], who equally have been working on this issue. We will be taking this floor several days this week to talk in extended terms about the chronic fatigue syndrome. It is a serious illness and one that we as a nation need to deal with in a more aggressive manner.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge Annual International Awareness Day for Chronic Immunological and Neurological Diseases. These illnesses are among the fastest growing health concerns in our country and constitute a large and neglected area in medical research. Chronic fatigue immune dysfunction syndrome [CFIDS] and fibromyalgia syndrome [FMS] are illnesses which affect at least a half million American adults and children. It is imperative that increased funding for research for CFIDS and FMS be approved in a timely fashion.

CFIDS is a serious and complex illness that affects nearly every aspect of an individual's life. It is characterized by incapacitating fatigue, neurological problems and numerous other symptoms. Approximately 1,000 individuals in Suffolk County alone suffer from this disease. One of my constituents, named Anthony Wasneuski, was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome in 1990. Mr. Wasneuski was a furniture salesman in New York City. He was also an accomplished artist who received a scholarship from the Brooklyn Museum. Unfortunately, because of this illness he must now remain at home, and now has difficulty even signing his own name. Mr. Wasneuski's story represents a real life experience behind the cold numbers and statistics of this debilitating disease.

Fibromyalgia syndrome is a chronic, widespread musculoskeletal pain and fatigue disorder for which the cause is unknown. Research studies have indicated that approximately 2 percent of the general population are afflicted with FMS. The majority of FMS patients are female and symptoms may begin in young, school-aged children. Tragically, it takes approximately 3 years and costs thousands of dollars just to receive a diagnosis of the disease.

Chronic fatigue immune dysfunction system and fibromyalgia clearly affect people from all walks of life. As the 1998 appropriations process gets underway, we need to focus upon ways that we can provide more research funding for these debilitating conditions.

Mrs. McCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take the opportunity to thank my colleague, Mr. FORBES, for organizing this opportunity to speak out on chronic fatigue and immune dysfunction syndrome [CFIDS].

I would like to take this opportunity to talk about a little known but devastating disease:

CFIDS. Once dismissed by doctors, this syndrome is now being taken seriously. Studies vary on how many people are affected by this disease but a conservative estimate is about 390,000 adult cases in the United States.

In the tristate area of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, approximately 4,094 to 11,000 people have CFIDS.

CFIDS is truly a terrible disease. It ranges in severity from patients who are just able to maintain a job, and may have to give up other aspects of their lives, to those who are bedridden and unable to take care of themselves.

While CFIDS traditionally affects young women in the prime of their lives, a growing number of children appear to have CFIDS. The fact that this disease is striking young children is particularly disturbing. This disabling illness will have a disastrous effect on the economy by preventing young children from becoming income-earning, tax-paying citizens.

While CFIDS is not known to be a killer, it has no proven treatment and no cure. Moreover, it is difficult and, unfortunately, nearly impossible to get a timely and correct diagnosis.

Because patients go to many different doctors to find a diagnosis, they often are subjected to unnecessary, costly, and potentially harmful treatments.

Mr. Speaker, this must change. Doctors, medical professionals, and those who are entering the medical fields must be educated about CFIDS. Delaying diagnosis is not only harmful to the patient, it is not cost effective. Treating individuals early in the disease process offers more promise for return to normal and productive living.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of this very important special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California [Mr. DREIER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. DREIER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

HONORING AMELIA EARHART

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. RYUN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYUN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a great woman, a great Kansan, and a great American. Amelia Mary Earhart was born on July 24, 1897 in Atchison, KS as the grandchild of original Kansas pioneers.

The pioneering spirit never left Amelia as she achieved a collection of firsts and world records in which we should all take pride. These include the

first woman to receive pilot certification, the first woman to fly nonstop across the United States; the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean; and the first woman to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Amelia Earhart was an early advocate of commercial aviation and lectured in the 1930's that one day people would fly through the sky every day to get from one place to another.

Earhart's commitment to aviation was equaled by her commitment to advancing equality and opportunity for women. She served as an aeronautical adviser and women's career counselor at Purdue University. She promoted equality for women in public presentations and appearances, but most importantly, Amelia Earhart led by example, by doing things that no one thought possible.

□ 1900

Even in her disappearance, Amelia Earhart was striving to do that which had never been done, to become the first woman to circle the globe. This year marks the centennial celebration of the life and achievements of Amelia Earhart. We recognize this daughter of Atchison, KS, and honor her extraordinary contributions to women, science, aeronautics, and the Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. SMITH] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

THE TRAGEDY OF ALCOHOL-RELATED DEATHS ON OUR NATION'S HIGHWAYS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. BILIRAKIS] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that two in every five Americans, 40 percent, will be involved in an alcohol-related crash at some time in their lives. I rise today to reflect on the tragedy that drunk driving has brought to victims and their families around the United