

Lifesaving Award, a Certificate of Valor, or a Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medal of Valor. This year, it is expected that 37 agency personnel will be honored for acts of bravery that demonstrated extraordinary ingenuity, judgement or zeal.

Mr. Speaker, I would be honored today to read the names of the 3 officers of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Department who will receive the 1999 Valor Awards. Receiving the Lifesaving Award: Private First Class David L. Ross and Deputy Sheriff Charles E. Michael, Jr.; Bronze Medal of Valor: Deputy Sheriff Erin L. Cox.

In 1989, the Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce established a special fund to award scholarships to the children of Valor Award medal winners who wish to pursue post-secondary education. Support of the Scholarship Fund demonstrates the sincere appreciation of our County's public safety officers. Over the past ten years, more than one hundred generous businesses and individuals have contributed to this worthy fund, and numerous scholarships have been awarded.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I wish to thank all those who serve the Fairfax County Sheriff's Department. Since 1979, more than 250 members of the Fairfax County Police Department, Fire and Rescue Department, and the Office of the Sheriff have received Gold, Silver or Bronze Medals of Valor. I recognize the professionalism of the men and women who are honored here today. I applaud the heroic efforts the members of the Fairfax Sheriff's Department make on our behalf as we extend our appreciation to these exceptional individuals today. I commend these individuals and their colleagues for their undaunted commitment to the citizenry.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE
CHARLTON COUNTY HIGH
SCHOOL INDIANS, 1999 CLASS A
STATE FOOTBALL CHAMPIONS

HON. SAXBY CHAMBLISS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the Charlton County High School football team in Folkston, Georgia, for recently capturing the Class A State Championship title. This fine group of young men and their coaches from Georgia's 8th Congressional District deserve great recognition for their hard work, dedication, and success.

This is not only a victory for these fine young men, but for their school, parents, and community as well, particularly all who played a role in supporting the team throughout a hard year of practices and games.

I want to congratulate CCHS head football coach Rich McWhorter and assistant coaches Bill Pitt, Mike Baxter, Mike McNeil, Russ Murray, Josh Howard, Dee Barronton, and Tim Cochran for their leadership and dedication to the team. Coaches spend every day of their lives building character, integrity, and determination in our young athletes, and I want to commend them for their commitment and service.

I also want to take this time to recognize the Charlton County Indians individually. The 1999 players are Steve Smiley, Kevin Davis,

Marcus Cobb, Snapper Hobbs, Cortez Reed, Cecil Reed, Matt Albertie, Fielding Dean, Antwan Harvey, Bama Adams, Mark Smith, Walter Williams, Jamie Jackson, Muhammad Abdullah, Jerome Pollock, Frank Dasher, Anthony Haston, Antonio Harvey, Lamar Williams, Harold Hannans, Lanier Milton, Alex Zow, Dantonio Davis, Chip Jackson, Tim Todd, Pierre Sims, Nathaniel Davis, Jason Bridges, Vincent Green, Nahshon Nicks, Chris Davis, Brian Drury, Demario Austin, Ivory Smiley, Marquis Elmore, Brett Mitchell, Gene Wilson, Norris Woods, Cedric Mildton, Brian Lloyd, Justin Crumbley, J.D. Carter, Jason Wainwright, Spencer Crews, Tony Geoghagan, Ben Huling, Michael Spurlock, Brandon Drury, Dusty Phillips, Luke Gowen, Scott Woolard, Ben Brantley, Marcus Jackson, Kyle Cook, Sam Melton, Scott Davis, Dusty Thomas, Jarvis Blackshear, Justin Pollock, Jimmy Scipp, Matt Drury, and Michael Reed.

Mr. Speaker, victory cannot be achieved without the hard work, talent, and perseverance of every single athlete, the strong leadership and direction of the coaches, in addition to the strong support of parents, teachers, students, and the community. We from South Georgia know how important community support is. The Indians are truly a team to be proud of, and it is an honor for me to represent Charlton County, Georgia, in the U.S. House of Representatives. I look forward to many more victories from this outstanding team in the years to come.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

HON. DIANA DeGETTE

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Ms. DEGETTE. Mr. Speaker, four years ago this week, the Congress approved the Telecommunications Act of 1996. While I was not a Member of Congress at that time, I was working on these issues while I was in the Colorado state legislature. On the anniversary of the Act, I would like to both herald the progress that has been made and comment on what challenges remain.

One of the main goals of the 1996 Act was to allow more competitors into local phone markets in order to spur competition and provide better opportunities for consumers. The introduction of competition into the local markets has been much slower than anticipated and, at this time, over 90% of Americans have very little choice of local telephone providers.

The ultimate goal of course is greater competition in all markets, which will result in more choices and better prices for consumers. Many new companies, many of which are located in my home state of Colorado, have sprung up in the past few years and have gained a significant foothold in the exploding business of e-commerce. Nearly a billion dollars are being invested by new entrant telecommunications companies in facilities and services every month.

Today, more than ninety-nine percent of Americans can reach an Internet Service Provider (ISP) with a local phone call. Forty-six states have 100 or more ISPs and more than half of the states have over 200 ISPs to choose from. These ISPs connect into back-

bone providers which have also grown from fourteen at that time the Act was passed, to forty-three today.

This growth has been remarkable and has benefited consumers enormously. It is important that the pro-competitive provisions of the 1996 Act are kept in place so that we can keep moving towards a fully integrated and competitive market.

I am strongly in favor of increased competition in all areas of telecommunications, which will mean better service and lower prices for customers. The sooner there is more competition in both local and long-distance telephone markets and the Internet industry, the better it will be for all consumers. I look forward to the day when my constituents have a multitude of choices in all areas of telecommunications, whether it be voice or high-speed data services.

PHARMACEUTICAL ACT OF 2000

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Pharmaceutical Freedom Act of 2000. This legislation ensures that millions of Americans, including seniors, have access to affordable pharmaceutical products. My bill makes pharmaceuticals more affordable to seniors by reducing their taxes. It also removes needless government barriers to importing pharmaceuticals and it protects Internet pharmacies, which are making affordable prescription drugs available to millions of Americans, from being strangled by federal regulation.

The first provision of my legislation provides seniors a tax credit equal to 80 percent of their prescription drug costs. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, our nation's seniors are struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need in order to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Yet, the Federal Government continues to impose taxes on Social Security benefits and limits senior citizens' ability to earn additional income by reducing Social Security benefits if a senior exceeds the "earnings limitation." Meanwhile, Congress continually raids the Social Security trust fund to finance unconstitutional programs! It is long past time for Congress to choose between helping seniors afford medicine or using the Social Security trust fund as a slush fund for big government and pork-barrel spending.

Mr. Speaker, I do wish to clarify that this tax credit is intended to supplement the efforts to reform and strengthen the Medicare system to ensure seniors have the ability to use Medicare funds to purchase prescription drugs. I am a strong supporter of strengthening the Medicare system to allow for more choice and consumer control, including structural reforms that will allow seniors to use Medicare funds to cover the costs of prescription drugs.

In addition to making prescription medications more affordable for seniors, my bill lowers the price for prescription medicines by reducing barriers to the importation of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals. Under my bill, anyone wishing to import a drug simply submits an application to the FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the U.S.

or is adulterated or misbranded. This process will make safe and affordable imported medicines affordable to millions of Americans. Mr. Speaker, letting the free market work is the best means of lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

The Pharmaceutical Freedom Act also protects consumers' access to affordable prescription drugs by forbidding the Federal Government from regulating any Internet sales of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals by state-licensed pharmacists. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the Internet makes pharmaceuticals and other products more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. However, the Federal Government has threatened to destroy this option by imposing unnecessary and unconstitutional regulations on web sites which sell pharmaceuticals. Any federal regulations would inevitably drive up prices of pharmaceuticals, thus depriving many consumers of access to affordable prescription medications.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make pharmaceuticals more affordable and accessible by lowering taxes on senior citizens, removing barriers to the importation of pharmaceuticals and protecting legitimate Internet pharmacies from needless regulation by cosponsoring the Pharmaceutical Freedom Act of 2000.

TRIBUTE TO LOS ROBLES BANK

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Los Robles Bank headquartered in Thousand Oaks, California for its continued Superior Customer Service contributions and continued success as a financial institution during its 12 years of existence in the Conejo Valley.

Since Los Robles Bank's inception on July 2, 1987, its marketing plan has always been to provide superior service to the small-to-medium sized businesses in the Conejo Valley and contiguous communities.

Under the very capable leadership of its President and Chief Executive Officer, Robert B. Hamilton and Jerry H. Miller, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Los Robles Bank has grown to operate Branches in Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, and Camarillo. The Bank has grown to assets of over \$153,000,000 as of June 30, 1999.

Los Robles Bank was selected as the Outstanding Business of the Year for 1998 by the Thousand Oaks/Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce and for two consecutive years received the Readers' choice award as "Best Bank in Conejo Valley" based upon votes cast by Daily News' readers.

Other Significant Corporate Citizenship includes roles in and contributions to Under One Roof, Rotary International, Optimist Clubs of Thousand Oaks, Pleasant Valley Lions Club, Thousand Oaks Police Department, Ventura County High Schools and College Scholarship Funds, Conejo Free Clinic, Year-Round Star Program and Youth employment and Training

Programs, Junior charity League, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Hospice, United Way, many Mansions, Mana, Conejo-Las Virgenes Future Foundation, Park Oaks Elementary School Reading Program, Conejo Valley Days, and Special Kids Day.

In High School sports Los Robles Bank has continuously supported athletic programs at Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Westlake and Aldolfo Camarillo High Schools.

The Bank is an active sponsor for California Lutheran Universities Academic program through membership in the Community Leaders Club and the Matthews Business Management Forum.

Recently Credit Suisse Bank sent a top official to Los Robles Bank to learn about the Bank operations and approaches to banking in general. The Suisse Bank representative upon his departure stated that he was most impressed with Los Robles Bank's customer service and employee relations skills—something that is continually stressed by the Bank's Management.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in recognizing Los Robles Bank for its accomplishments and successes in both the Banking and Civic communities over the past 12 years.

HONORABLE EVELYN DIXSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Brooklyn's grand dames, Mrs. Evelyn Dixon.

Mrs. Dixon has provided a lifetime of public service to the people of Brooklyn. She was elected to eight consecutive two-year terms as a Democratic State Committeewoman for the 56th Assembly District. She is a past President of the Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. and is presently an advisor to the Club. She is also a former member of the Board of Directors of Elected Officials of New York State; a past President of the Bedford Stuyvesant Lioness Club; and a charter member of the Stuyvesant Heights Lions Club International. A long time member of Cornerstone Baptist Church, Mrs. Dixon is President of the Cornerstone Federal Credit Union and President of the Board of Directors for Cornerstone's Sandy F. Ray Elderly Housing.

As a result of her community activism, Evelyn Dixon has received numerous honors and awards including the Sojourner Truth Award, The Churchwoman of the Year Award from Key Women of America and the Melvin Jones Award from Lions International. She has also been honored by a number of elected officials like Brooklyn's Borough President, Howard Golden, and the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators, Inc. The Pratt Area Community Council also honored Ms. Dixon by naming one of its affordable housing projects in 1994, "The Evelyn Dixon Houses". The Dixon Houses are seven newly rehabilitated buildings in Brooklyn.

A former teacher, Mrs. Dixon was also Executive Administrative Assistant for the Taxi and Limousine Commission of New York City. She is an alumna of North Carolina State College. She also studied at Bank Street College and the New School for Social Research in New York City specializing in Early Childhood Education.

I am pleased to bring the achievements of one of Brooklyn's finest citizens, Mrs. Evelyn Dixon, to the attention of my colleagues.

IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 247 HONORING NATIONAL DONOR DAY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I join my colleague and good friend, Representative KAREN THURMAN, in support of House Concurrent Resolution 247, to honor National Donor Day and recognize the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow & blood donation.

With more than ten people dying every day and approximately 70,000 Americans currently awaiting organs, it is clear that our nation is facing a crisis. This resolution will help raise awareness and increase donations nationwide—it is a meaningful step toward bringing an end to our nation's current predicament.

A number of businesses, foundations, health organizations, and the Department of Health and Human Services have previously designated February 12th as National Donor Day. The first two National Donor Days succeeded in raising a total of almost 17,000 units of blood, adding over 2,400 potential donors to the National Marrow Donor Program Registry, and included mass distribution of organ and tissue pledge cards. This Concurrent Resolution supports National Donor Day, encourages Americans to learn about and openly discuss donation, and calls on the President to issue a proclamation to demonstrate support for organ, tissue, blood and bone marrow donation.

Research points to a clear need for public education and incentive programs to increase organ donation. This Congress, I also introduced legislation, H.R. 941, the "Gift of Life Congressional Medal Act of 1999," to create a commemorative medal that honors organ donors and their families. This Act is intended to draw attention to this life-saving issue and to send a clear message that donating one's organs is a selfless act worth the profound respect of our Nation. I hope Members would also consider this effort to increase donations.

This problem is clear—there are not enough organs to meet the needs of patients nationwide. Let's support initiatives such as H.R. 941, to create an organ donor medal, and H. Con. Res. 247, to honor National Donor Day and recognize the importance of organ, tissue, bone marrow & blood donation. Such initiatives will help raise awareness, increase donations nationwide, and both are meaningful steps toward bringing an end to the lack of available organs nationwide.