

Let us not forget why we are blessed with freedom and democracy in this country. The sacrifices made by those who served in the military are something that must never be overlooked. Promises were made to those who served in the Uniformed Services. They were told that their health care would be taken care of for life if they served a minimum of twenty years of active federal service.

Well, those military retirees served their time and expected the government to hold up its end of the bargain. They are now realizing that these were nothing more than empty promises. Those who served in the military did not let their country down in its time of need and we should not let military retirees down in theirs. It's time military retirees get what was promised to them and that's why I am introducing this legislation.

SHRIMP IMPORTATION FINANCING
FAIRNESS ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Shrimp Importation Financing Fairness Act. This bill aids America's struggling domestic shrimping industry by placing a moratorium on restrictive regulations affecting the shrimping industry. This bill also prevents tax dollars from going to the domestic shrimping industry's major foreign competitors.

The United States domestic shrimping industry is a vital social and economic force in many coastal communities across the United States, including several in my congressional district. A thriving shrimping industry benefits not only those who own and operate shrimp boats, but also food processors, hotels and restaurants, grocery stores, and all those who work in and service these industries. Shrimping also serves as a key source of safe domestic foods at a time when the nation is engaged in hostilities abroad.

Given the importance of a strong shrimping industry to so many Americans, it seems strange that the federal government continues to burden shrimpers with excessive regulations. For example, the federal government has imposed costly regulations, dealing with usage of items such as by catch reduction devices and turtle excluder devices (TEDS), on the industry. The mandatory use of these devices results in a significant reduction in the amount of shrimp caught by domestic shrimpers, thus damaging their competitive position and market share.

Many members of Congress have let the National Marine Fisheries Service, which is the lead federal agency with responsibility to regulate the domestic shrimp industry, know of their displeasure with the unreasonable regulatory burden imposed upon the industry. In response, the agency held briefings with House and Senate staffers as well as industry representatives to discuss how the agency's actions are harming shrimpers.

However, even after hearing first-hand testimony from industry representatives and representatives of communities whose economies rely on a thriving shrimping industry, the agency refuses to refrain from placing regulatory encumbrances upon the domestic shrimping

industry. Therefore it is up to Congress to protect this industry from overzealous regulators. The Shrimp Importation Financing Fairness Act provides this protection by placing an indefinite moratorium on all future restrictive regulations on the shrimping industry.

Seven foreign countries (Thailand, Vietnam, India, China, Ecuador, Indonesia, and Brazil) have taken advantage of the domestic shrimping industry's government-created vulnerabilities. These countries each exported in excess of 20,000,000 pounds of shrimp to the United States in the first 6 months of 2002. These seven countries account for nearly 70 percent of all shrimp consumed in the United States in the first six months of this year and nearly 80 percent of all shrimp imported to this country in the same period!

Adding insult to injury, the federal government is forcing American shrimpers to subsidize their competitors! Since 1999, the United States Government has provided more than \$1,800,000,000 in financing and insurance for these foreign countries through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). Furthermore, according to the latest available figures, the U.S. current exposure relative to these countries through the Export-Import Bank totals some \$14,800,000,000. Thus, the United States taxpayer is providing a subsidy of at least \$16,500,000,000 to the home countries of the leading foreign competitors of American shrimpers! Of course, the American taxpayer could be forced to shovel more money to these countries through the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Many of the countries in question do not have free-market economics. Thus, the participation of these countries in United States-supported international financial regimes amounts to a direct subsidy by American shrimpers to their international competitors. In any case, providing aid to any of these countries indirectly grants benefits to foreign shrimpers because of the fungibility of money.

In order to ensure that American shrimpers are not forced to subsidize their competitors, the Shrimp Importation Financing Fairness Act ends all Export-Import and OPIC subsidies to the seven countries who imported more than 20 million pounds of shrimp in the first six months of 2002. The bill also reduces America's contribution to the IMF by America's pro rata share of any IMF aid provided to one of those seven countries.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to rein in regulation-happy bureaucrats and stop subsidizing the domestic shrimping industry's leading competitors. Otherwise, the government-manufactured depression in the price of shrimp will decimate the domestic shrimping industry and the communities whose economies depend on this industry. I, therefore, hope all my colleagues will stand up for shrimpers by cosponsoring the Shrimp Importation Financing Fairness Act.

HONORING THE ANSONIA COPPERS
ON THEIR TRIP TO THE NA-
TIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is with the greatest pride that I rise today to extend my

very best wishes to the Ansonia Coppers Junior Midget Football team as they head to the National Championships in Orlando. This group of 24 have worked hard throughout the regular and post seasons for this tremendous opportunity. In addition, their loudest cheering section, the Junior Pee Wee Girls will be on their way to their National Championship competition as well. The Ansonia community certainly has reason to celebrate the accomplishments of these fine young people!

The Ansonia Coppers, a team made up of twenty four boys, ages eleven through thirteen, are undefeated and have played through four rounds of post season games for the opportunity to play in the National Championships. Throughout this season, the Coppers have not only defeated every challenger they have faced, but, more importantly, they have learned one of life's most valuable lessons—teamwork. Football, like all sports, teaches us the value of team work, practice, comradery, and commitment to excellence. These skills will serve these young people well as they begin to make a difference in the world. Working together, they have already accomplished so much. I have every confidence that they will celebrate a great victory in Orlando.

The Ansonia Coppers are members of the Pop Warner Midget Football League which is unique in that all of their support comes from volunteers. From coaches to travel, almost every aspect of the team's playing is due to the support of community volunteers. It is with great pleasure that I also recognize Head Coach Ron Commune, Assistant Coaches Bob Jones, Bill Mikita, Mike Simon, Carl Williams, and Jay Frattalone, and Team Mom Michelle Spader—all of whom have worked hard to give these young people the chance to play! Without their efforts, the success of the Ansonia Coppers would not be possible.

I am thrilled to join the Ansonia community in extending my sincere congratulations and very best wishes to the Ansonia Coppers as they head to their National Championship game. I, as well as the entire community, will be rooting for you! Win or lose, you have made us very proud!

IN SUPPORT OF THE HUD HOUS-
ING AND SECURITY FLEXIBILITY
ACT

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 2003

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to the attention of the House an innovative program created by the Houston office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in conjunction with local law enforcement agencies in the Houston area. This program, utilizing grant money from the Operation Safe Home program, hires off-duty law enforcement officers to provide security and patrol housing complexes and apartments that are owned by or receive funds from HUD. This program has been a great success, and has made residents feel safer and more secure in their homes.

Unfortunately, this program turned out to be too innovative. Although this initiative has been an unqualified success, it turns out that HUD did not have the authority to make these