

WE THE PEOPLE: THE CITIZEN
AND THE CONSTITUTION

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, on April 26, 2003, more than 1,200 students from across the country will compete in the national finals of the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution program in Washington, DC. This program is the most extensive educational program in the country, developed specifically to educate young students about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The We the People program, administered by the Center for Civic Education, is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

I am proud to announce that the class from East Brunswick High School will represent the state of New Jersey in the program's finals. These students have worked conscientiously to reach the national finals by participating at local and statewide competitions. In the past fifteen years, these young scholars have won the state competition fourteen times, an accomplishment that should not go unnoticed. Through their experience, they have gained a deep knowledge and understanding of fundamental principles and values of our constitutional democracy. It is a great honor that students from the 12th District in New Jersey have shown such dedication and interest in our nation's government.

The three-day We the People national competition is modeled after hearings in the United States Congress. The hearings consist of oral presentations by high school students before a panel of adult judges on constitutional topics. The students are given an opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge while they evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. Their testimony is followed by a period of challenging questions by the judges who probe the students' depth of understanding and ability to apply their constitutional knowledge.

The We the People program provides curricular materials at upper elementary, middle and high school levels. The curriculum not only enhances students' appreciation of the institutions of American constitutional democracy, it also helps them identify the contemporary relevance of the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Critical thinking exercises, problem-solving activities, and cooperative learning techniques help develop participatory skills necessary to become active, responsible citizens.

The class from East Brunswick High School is currently preparing for their participation in the national competition in Washington, DC. It is inspiring to see these young people advocate the fundamental ideals and principles of our government, ideas that identify us as a people and bind us together as a nation. It is important for future generations to understand the values and principles fundamental to our endeavor to preserve and realize the promise of our constitutional democracy. I wish these young "constitutional experts" the best of luck at the We the People national finals and continued success in their endeavors.

SOCIAL SECURITY PROTECTION
ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 5, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reluctant opposition to H.R. 743, the Social Security Protection Act. While this bill contains many provisions worthy of support, it also removes the only means by which many widowed Texas public school teachers can receive the same spousal social security benefits as every other American. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, widowed public school employees in Texas, like public employees throughout the nation, have their spousal social security reduced if they receive a government pension. The Government Pension Offset even applies if the public employee in question worked all the quarters necessary to qualify for full social security benefits either before or after working in the public school system!

The effect of the Government Pension Offset is to punish people for teaching in public schools! However, current law provides widowed Texas public school teachers a means of collecting the full social security spousal benefits. Unfortunately, this bill removes that option from Texas teachers. Since I believe the Congress should repeal the Government Pension Offset by passing H.R. 524, which repeals both the Government Pension Offset and the Windfall Elimination Provision, another provision that denies public employees full social security benefits, I must oppose this bill.

Instead of punishing public school teachers, Congress should be encouraging good people to enter the education profession by passing my Teacher Tax Cut Act (H.R. 613) which provides every teacher with a \$1,000 tax credit, as well as my Professional Educators Tax Credit Act (H.R. 614), which provides a \$1,000 tax credit to counselors, librarians, and all school personnel. Congress should also act to protect the integrity of the Social Security Trust Fund by passing my Social Security Preservation Act (H.R. 219), which ensures that Social Security monies are not spent on other programs. Congress should also pass my Social Security for American Citizens Only Act (H.R. 489), which ensures that noncitizens who have not worked the required number of quarters and illegal immigrants do not receive social security benefits.

FOR SYBIL CROOKHAM

HON. DENNIS A. CARDOZA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Sybil N. Crookham. Mrs. Crookham was born on an Indian reservation on November 12, 1911. She moved to Merced County and enrolled in Winton School. She graduated from Merced High School in 1930, and received her Bachelor of Arts in education from San Francisco State in 1934.

Mrs. Crookham received a teaching job upon returning to Winton, California in 1934. However, she had to leave her job after

marrying Mr. Paul Crookham in 1937, as the school district had a policy against employing married teachers. Mrs. Crookham then went to work at the Bloss Hospital Sunshine School to teach children suffering from rheumatic fever.

In 1943, the Winton School Board revised its policy on married teachers, and reinstated Mrs. Crookham. Soon after, she began serving as a teacher-principal, and then as principal-superintendent. After receiving an administrative credential from Fresno State University, she served as the district's full-time superintendent until her retirement in 1974.

Even after her retirement in 1974, Mrs. Crookham stayed very active in the local community. She was elected to the Merced County Board of Education on which she served seven terms. Mrs. Crookham was instrumental in the Virginia Smith Scholarship Program, and was involved with well over fifty organizations in Merced County. When the Bloss House, a historical landmark in Atwater, California, was threatened, Mrs. Crookham helped to found the Atwater Historical Society to save and preserve the home. She remained on the Historical Society board until 2001.

In 1986, the first elementary school she attended was renamed "Sybil N. Crookham Elementary School." Mrs. Crookham's main priority was to ensure every student in Merced County receive a quality education. She played a vital role in locating the tenth University of California campus to be built in Merced. Her friends and coworkers described Mrs. Crookham as a tireless worker, and a champion of the youth.

Our community has been greatly strengthened by the efforts of Paul and Sybil Crookham. She never ceased to work on behalf of the children even after her retirement. Sybil was always called upon by community leaders for advice and counsel. Sybil set an example for others to follow. I am honored to have called Sybil Crookham my friend and am saddened for our community's loss. May God Bless Paul and the entire Crookham family.

TRIBUTE TO BUD GORDON—IRA D. CALVERT DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENT

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 6, 2003

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to an individual whose dedication contributions to the community of Corona, California are exceptional. Corona, and surrounding communities, has been fortunate to have dynamic and dedicated business and community leaders who willingly and unselfishly give their time and talent and make their communities a better place to live and work. Bud Gordon is one of these individuals. On March 22, 2003, Bud will be honored at the annual YMCA Ira D "Cal" Calvert Distinguished Service Awards Dinner.

For the past several years, Bud has volunteered and supported many of our most recognizable civic projects in Corona. He has served as the Executive Chairman of the Happy Hairston Youth Foundation and with late Happy Hairston, chaired the golf tournament for many years. Over the past seven years, Bud also has raised over one million