

the United States. The historical development of the mountainous states in North America, and Utah in particular, are of particular interest to them. The new involvement and interest of the Rocky Mountain States and Utah in sustainable mountain development could help many of the transitioning economies to develop and implement more successful, pro-market policies.

This is a rewarding and noble goal, especially now, when we are witnessing growing challenges to stability and development around the world from the growth of poverty and unemployment, two primary sources feeding terrorism and militancy.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INDUSTRIAL HEMP FARMING ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise to introduce the Industrial Hemp Farming Act. The Industrial Hemp Farming Act requires the Federal Government to respect State laws allowing the growing of industrial hemp.

Seven States—Hawaii, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Montana, North Dakota, and West Virginia—allow industrial hemp production or research in accord with State laws. However, Federal law is standing in the way of farmers in these States growing what may be a very profitable crop. Because of current federal law, all hemp included in products sold in the United States must be imported instead of being grown by American farmers.

Since 1970, the Federal Controlled Substances Act's inclusion of industrial hemp in the schedule one definition of marijuana has prohibited American farmers from growing industrial hemp despite the fact that industrial hemp has such a low content of THC (the psychoactive chemical in the related marijuana plant) that nobody can be psychologically affected by consuming hemp. Federal law concedes the safety of industrial hemp by allowing it to be legally imported for use as food.

The United States is the only industrialized nation that prohibits industrial hemp cultivation. The Congressional Research Service has noted that hemp is grown as an established agricultural commodity in over 30 nations in Europe, Asia, and North America. My Industrial Hemp Farming Act will relieve this unique restriction on American farmers and allow them to grow industrial hemp in accord with State law.

Industrial hemp is a crop that was grown legally throughout the United States for most of our Nation's history. In fact, during World War II, the Federal Government actively encouraged American farmers to grow industrial hemp to help the war effort. The Department of Agriculture even produced a film "Hemp for Victory" encouraging the plant's cultivation.

In recent years, the hemp plant has been put to many popular uses in foods and in industry. Grocery stores sell hemp seeds and oil as well as food products containing oil and seeds from the hemp plant. Industrial hemp is also included in consumer products such as paper, cloths, cosmetics, and carpet. One of the more innovative recent uses of industrial hemp is in the door frames of about 1.5 million

cars. Hemp has even been used in alternative automobile fuel.

It is unfortunate that the Federal Government has stood in the way of American farmers, including many who are struggling to make ends meet, competing in the global industrial hemp market. Indeed, the founders of our Nation, some of whom grew hemp, would surely find that Federal restrictions on farmers growing a safe and profitable crop on their own land are inconsistent with the constitutional guarantee of a limited, restrained Federal Government. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to stand up for American farmers and cosponsor the Industrial Hemp Farming Act.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MOUNT VERNON RECREATION CENTER

HON. JAMES P. MORAN

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center in Alexandria, Virginia on receiving the Heart of Potomac West Award.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center has been a key partner in the Del Ray Potomac West community of Alexandria for decades. The Center's staff has built long-lasting relationships with the community, including neighbors, businesses, and visitors, by ensuring that the Center's doors are open and that every community member is welcome.

Each year, the Center staff helps to organize and assist with numerous events for the residents and businesses of Del Ray. These include the Annual Holiday Tree Lighting, the Annual Halloween Parade, Art on the Avenue, Cinema Del Ray, First Night on New Year's Eve, and countless programs for seniors and youth.

Without the support of these dedicated, hardworking, and caring staff members, such events could never take place.

The staff of the Mount Vernon Recreation Center has stood side by side with the community during times of crisis. When Del Ray lost two of its citizens, Kevin Shifflet and Nancy Dunning, the Center staff acted as a support beacon for a community in mourning, providing a home where citizens turned for comfort and support. These devoted and committed staffers have always gone far above and beyond the call of duty.

The Mount Vernon Recreation Center is a marvelous asset of the City of Alexandria, and this has occurred through the hard work and dedication of the Center staff. I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Center staff on being awarded this great honor.

TRIBUTE TO CLERK OF THE HOUSE KAREN HAAS

HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. SIMPSON. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to rise and show my appreciation for Karen Haas, the outgoing Clerk of the House.

Karen is truly deserving of recognition for a job very well done.

It is a pleasure to know Karen, as she is one of the most thoughtful and considerate people on Capitol Hill. She has done an exceptional job running the Clerk's office, and knowing that Karen was in charge meant other members and I knew that things were getting done right.

I can even say that I have had the privilege to "work" for Karen. When Karen ran the House floor operations, I would get calls at all times of the day asking if I could preside. I never hesitated to preside when Karen asked, nor did my colleagues.

Some people might have been surprised when Speaker HASTERT tapped Karen to fill the Clerk's position. I wasn't surprised; I knew he made a very good choice.

Karen has done a magnificent job as Clerk and we will truly miss having her in the Capitol. Karen, thank you for a job well done.

INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDENT AID REWARD ACT OF 2007

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today along with Representative THOMAS PETRI to introduce the Student Aid Reward Act of 2007, the STAR Act, a bill that is a vital part of strengthening America's middle class.

Since 2001, tuition and fees at public colleges and universities have exploded, increasing by 41 percent—after inflation. Students are graduating with greater amounts of debt than ever before, and unfortunately as many as 200,000 prospective students each year decide not to go to college because they can't afford it.

Already in this Congress we have taken great strides toward making a college education affordable for all qualified students through increased grant aid and more affordable student loans.

The Student Aid Reward Act continues the mission of putting students and families first by providing additional need-based grant aid to students without any cost to the taxpayer.

This legislation is simple: It encourages colleges to use the less expensive of the federal government's two student loan programs, and puts the savings back into the hands of students through need-based grant aid.

In order to do this, the Student Aid Reward Act calls on the Secretary of Education to determine which of the two Federally backed student loan programs is more efficient. Schools that elect to use the more efficient program would then be rewarded with additional scholarship funds for and graduate fellowship money for low- and middle-income students—all paid for by the savings generated by the bill.

According to the President's recently released 2008 education budget, student loans made through the more expensive program in 2007 cost \$3 more for every \$100 lent than the same loans made with U.S. Treasury funds.

At a time when our Federal Government is facing an extreme deficit, this is a win-win bill