

After the war, Thaddeus went on to obtain his law degree from Brooklyn Law School. He led an active life in local politics and community affairs for many years, serving on the Legal Redress Committee of the Brooklyn NAACP and a legal advisor in the Brooklyn Democratic Party. His legal career progressed when he won the election for Judge of the Civil Court of New York City in 1975. He became the first African American man appointed to the Supreme Court of Staten Island, and then returned to Brooklyn to serve as a fully appointed State Supreme Court Justice in 1982. Thaddeus retired in 1995.

Thaddeus loved to read and was appreciated for his intellectual brilliance. Charming and outgoing, he was known for his quick wit and playful sense of humor. Thaddeus always put the care and well-being of his family first, his wife, Emma Louise Owens, his two sons, Thaddeus Jr. and David, and his two daughters, Michele and Priscilla. On behalf of the United States Congress and the people of the 11th District of Ohio, I express my sincerest condolences to the family of Thaddeus Edgar Owens, Sr. May his legacy of compassion forever live in our hearts.

COLLEGE STUDENT CREDIT CARD PROTECTION ACT

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to introduce the College Student Credit Card Protection Act. This bill seeks to address a growing problem among college students in the United States: devastating credit card debt.

Nellie Mae's Student Credit Card Usage Analysis in 2005 found that the outstanding balance for the average college student was \$2,169. Final year students carried an average balance of \$2,864 while freshmen carry an average balance of \$1,585. Additionally, as students progress through school, credit card usage swells. Ninety-one percent of final year students have a credit card compared to 42% of freshmen. The study also found that the average American college student is graduating with more than 4 credit cards to their name.

College freshmen are typically offered eight credit cards during their first semester. Semester after semester, students open their mail boxes to find envelopes notifying them that they are pre-approved for credit cards with a \$500 limit and no annual fee. When they check their e-mail, there are more credit card offers. When they answer the phone in their dorm room, there are even more offers.

Credit card companies pay college students generously to stand outside dining halls, dorms, and academic buildings and encourage their peers to apply for credit cards. With each completed application, the student applicant receives free gifts—from t-shirts to indoor basketball hoops—and the credit card company receives another interest-paying customer.

I have heard horror stories from my district about college students overwhelmed by credit card debt. One third-year college student had amassed a whopping \$14,000 of debt. The question that cries out for an answer is: why

are we making it so easy for our young people to amass such outrageous amounts of debt?

With interest rates climbing, fees increasing, and the number of credit card holders going up every day, credit card companies should not be allowed to expand their unfair, predatory business practices by exploiting our Nation's future. College students are often inexperienced consumers who can get sucked into unfair credit card deals or simply get in over their heads with the numerous underlying and unknown fees. Many simply sign up for a credit card without any knowledge of the interest rate, fees, and penalties that come along with their card. We must address these unfair lending practices and fees to help American college students avoid enormous financial burdens from which, as adults, they may never recover.

College graduation should be a time of excitement and new beginnings; a time when students can watch the skills they have learned in college manifest into successful careers and happy lives. But instead of seeing endless possibilities, too many students are burdened with endless debt. Studies now show that the likelihood of homeownership decreases as student debt increases. It is heartbreaking to me to think that recent graduates could jeopardize their future because we have allowed creditors to lend them sums of money they have no hope of paying back.

That is why I, along with Congressman DUNCAN, my friend from Tennessee, have reintroduced the College Student Credit Card Protection Act. The bill will take important steps toward reducing credit card debts to college students by requiring credit card companies to determine whether a student applicant has the financial means to pay off a credit card balance before they are approved. It would restrict the credit limit to minimum balances if the student has no independent income, and require parental approval for credit limit increases in the event that a parent cosigns the account.

It is time for credit card companies to be responsible lenders. For the sake of our college students and their futures, it is critical that we pass legislation that prevents credit card companies from plunging young men and women into debt.

Madam Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to address this critical issue facing college students nation-wide, and I urge the House to consider and pass this bill quickly.

INTRODUCTION OF TREAT PHYSICIANS FAIRLY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Treat Physicians Fairly Act, legislation providing tax credits to physicians to compensate for the costs of providing uncompensated care. This legislation helps compensate medical professionals for the costs imposed on them by Federal laws forcing doctors to provide uncompensated medical care. The legislation also provides a tax deduction for hospitals that incur costs related to providing uncompensated care.

Under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) physicians who work in emergency rooms are required to provide care, regardless of a person's ability to pay, to anyone who comes into an emergency room. Hospitals are also required by law to bear the full costs of providing free care to anyone who seeks emergency care. Thus, EMTALA forces medical professionals and hospitals to bear the entire cost of caring for the indigent. According to the June 2/9, 2003 edition of AM News, emergency physicians lose an average of \$138,000 in revenue per year because of EMTALA. EMTALA also forces physicians and hospitals to follow costly rules and regulations. Physicians can be fined \$50,000 for technical EMTALA violations.

The professional skills with which one earns a living are property. Therefore, the clear language of the Takings Clause of the Fifth Amendment prevents Congress from mandating that physicians and hospitals bear the entire costs of providing health care to any group.

Ironically, the perceived need to force doctors to provide medical care is itself the result of prior government interventions into the health care market. When I began practicing medicine, it was common for doctors to provide uncompensated care as a matter of charity. However, laws and regulations inflating the cost of medical services and imposing unreasonable liability standards on medical professionals even when they were acting in a volunteer capacity made offering free care cost prohibitive. At the same time, the increasing health care costs associated with the government-facilitated overreliance on third party payments priced more and more people out of the health care market. Thus, the government responded to problems created by its interventions by imposing the EMTALA mandate on physicians, in effect making health care professionals scapegoats for the harmful consequences of government health care policies.

EMTALA could actually decrease the care available for low-income Americans at emergency rooms. This is because EMTALA discourages physicians from offering any emergency care. Many physicians in my district have told me that they are considering curtailing their practices, in part because of the costs associated with the EMTALA mandates. Many other physicians are even counseling younger people against entering the medical profession because of the way the Federal Government treats medical professionals. The tax credits created in the Treat Physicians Fairly Act will help mitigate some of the burden government policies place on physicians.

The Treat Physicians Fairly Act does not remove any of EMTALA's mandates; it simply provides that physicians can receive a tax credit for the costs of providing uncompensated care. This is a small step toward restoring fairness to physicians. Furthermore, by providing some compensation in the form of tax credits, the Treat Physicians Fairly Act helps remove the disincentives to remaining active in the medical profession built into the current EMTALA law. I hope my colleagues will take the first step toward removing the unconstitutional burden of providing uncompensated care by cosponsoring the Treat Physicians Fairly Act.