

Women Business Owners in Chicago, remains operational 4 years after it stopped receiving Federal money under this program. For mere seed money in the late 1980's, we are still helping women get their economic footing.

Mr. Chairman, this program has since its inception received broad bipartisan support in both houses of Congress. It does what we want most Federal programs to do: runs on a shoestring, produces concrete results, reaches and benefits a wide array of individuals, permits only a finite and brief period of financial aid to any one recipient location, and requires no bureaucracy to run it. This program works and it puts people to work. I urge all Members to support this bill and I look forward to its quick passage.

HONORING AMERICAN WORKING MEN AND WOMEN

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, to commemorate our Nation's Labor Day holiday, and to honor New York's vibrant and diverse work force. Appropriately enough, before Congress adjourns, we will have passed a bill to raise the minimum wage and sent it to the President for his signature. This marks a tremendous victory for those people who have been working tirelessly to ensure that this vital, and long overdue, action be taken. Many people deserve praise for their work on this and other issues, but I would especially like to recognize the New York State AFL-CIO, the Long Island Central Labor Council, the New York Central Labor Council, and the Building and Construction Trades Union of the AFL-CIO, as well as all of you in the labor community who have united to work together against the antilabor sentiment that has pervaded Congress in the last 18 months. Your immeasurable support in this effort has assisted Congress in finally, after 7 years, passing a much-needed raise in our Nation's minimum wage, as well as staving off several vitriolic attacks on our Nation's workers.

In a short time, those workers who have been scraping by on \$4.25 an hour will get some relief for their families by earning a little bit more. Right now, the minimum wage is at 40-year low in terms of purchasing power. The simple fact is that people can no longer raise a family on this kind of wage. Yes, it's a small step, but it's no secret that it's a step that most Americans have desired for a long time. In fact, 80 percent of the American public supports this raise. Additionally, this legislation is the essence of family values—in other words, by enacting this measure, we are truly valuing our families. In my view, it is a simple matter. If we don't assist, nurture, and encourage our families to attain a higher standard of living, how do we expect America as a whole to succeed?

However, this labor-unfriendly majority has, for some time now, been a virtual roadblock in the way of achieving meaningful legislation such as this, as well as other important labor and family related matters. We need to continue to be in the business of improving, not undercutting, the well being, and survival, of our families. Nonetheless, whether its been in

the form of striker-replacement legislation, allowing companies to raid the pensions of its workers, crafting a bill to mandate employer-led organizations to address labor issues, or cutting funding for important agencies such as the Occupational Safety and Health Administration [OSHA] and the National Labor Relations Board [NLRB], the Republican leadership has strived to make it more difficult for American workers to have access to safety and security in their jobs. These actions do not send the right message to hardworking Americans, and I intend to ensure that trend is reversed.

Lastly, through the persistent efforts of those such as my colleague Senator TED KENNEDY, we are also able to pass a serious first step toward meaningful health insurance reform. This bill will affect at least 25 million Americans who either change or lose their jobs, or have preexisting conditions in their family that has, up until now, given insurance companies an excuse not to offer comprehensive health insurance. That is patently unfair and just plain wrong, and I have consistently made sure that these concerns are addressed properly.

Working men and women have been the glue of this country ever since its inception, and I heartily salute them on Labor Day 1996. I strongly urge my colleagues to commemorate with me the workers of New York and their families on this day, and I look forward to a time when all Americans can feel safe in their jobs and financially secure in their lives.

TRIBUTE TO THE EIGHTH BRONX PUERTO RICAN DAY PARADE

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the eighth Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade, which will be held this Sunday in my South Bronx congressional district.

Mr. Speaker, this year, like each of the past 7, Puerto Ricans from all five boroughs of New York City, and from Puerto Rico have come together to march along the Grand Concourse, the South Bronx, in celebration of Puerto Rican traditions, music, and history.

Under the leadership of its President, Adolfo Carrión, Jr., the parade has continued to grow attracting thousands of visitors from New York State and other areas of the United States. This year more than 400,000 participants are expected.

The 1996 Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade will commemorate the centenary of the flag of Puerto Rico. In its honor, participants will march carrying the Puerto Rican flag with pride.

Mr. Speaker, the idea and design of the Puerto Rican flag were conceived in New York City. On December 22, 1895, a group of Puerto Ricans patriots met at Chimney Hall, between 25th Street and 6th Avenue, in Manhattan, to approve a resolution for the adoption of the Puerto Rican flag. The flag which was presented that day was sewn by Ms. Mima Barbosa.

The parade will also honor and recognize the Puerto Rican community for transforming New York City into a bilingual city. It is in their honor that we celebrate Puerto Rican culture and the Spanish language.

The parade will feature the music of "La India," Pete "Conde" Rodriguez, and Ray Sepulveda, among other performers. It will be a day of joyful celebration of Puerto Rican heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the individuals and participants who have made possible the celebration of the Bronx Puerto Rican Day Parade—8 years of bringing joy to the community.

IN APPRECIATION OF ROBERT BITZER

HON. GLENN POSHARD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. POSHARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Robert Bitzer of Shelbyville, IL. For half a century, he touched many lives as a selfless community leader and businessman. Mr. Bitzer passed way on July 18, leaving behind a legacy of hard work and dedication.

Mr. Bitzer was born March 30, 1923 in East St. Louis, IL. He graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in business administration. From 1945 to 1947 he assumed the role of Chief Illiniwek and made an appearance in the Rose Bowl. Though such an experience would often lead to a lifetime of storytelling, those who heard the story of this modest man, only heard it from others.

As a World War II veteran, he went on to serve as president of Bitzer-Taggart Motor Co. for 44 years. During this time, his tireless involvement in the community led some to dub him "Mr. Shelbyville." He was an instrumental force in the development of Lake Shelbyville and served as the chairman of the Lake Shelbyville 25th Anniversary Celebration. His numerous leadership positions in the community were rewarded with the Business Ethics and Social Involvement Award and the Outstanding Businessman Award from the city of Shelbyville. Despite his unwavering dedication to the community, his family was always his first priority.

Mr. Speaker, Robert Bitzer was a model citizen whose humble service and dedication were the archetype of "leading by example." His life is an inspiration that we can all look to with pride, and do our best to emulate. It is a privilege to represent him in the United States Congress.

TRIBUTE TO KAREN CLARK

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, as president and CEO of Managed Healthcare Systems, Inc. [MHS], Karen L. Clark has pioneered the concept of community-based managed care in New York City. In leading MHS from its inception 2 years ago to its current position as the fourth largest provider of Medicaid managed care in the city, Ms. Clark has demonstrated that a minority-controlled and operated, for-profit health maintenance organization [HMO] can successfully deliver quality health care to residents of inner-city neighborhoods that

have traditionally lacked extensive medical and health services.

With a mission to improve the quality of life for Medicaid recipients and other medically underserved citizens by elevating their health status, MHS, under Ms. Clark's stewardship, has designed a health plan that seeks to increase its members' utilization of services by helping them foster a relationship with a primary care physician, educating them about the importance of wellness and preventive care and offering them a series of creative outreach and case management programs.

Ms. Clark brings extensive experience in health care management to MHS. A graduate of Rider College and the Columbia School of Business, Ms. Clark was senior vice president for Healthcare Management Alternatives [HMA], an innovative inner-city health plan in Philadelphia, from 1989 to 1993. At HMA, Ms. Clark was responsible for quality assurance, utilization review, and provider relations for approximately 85,000 residents of South and West Philadelphia.

Prior to joining HMA, Ms. Clark served at Travelers Health Network of New York from 1987 to 1989, initially as director of operations and provider relations and then as executive director. As executive director, she was responsible for development and maintenance of the provider network for the Travelers' managed health care division in Metropolitan New York and northern New Jersey.

Ms. Clark has also exemplified her pioneering spirit through prior positions with such companies as Whittaker Health Services, Interracial Council for Business Opportunity, Managed Health Plan, Health Insurance Plan of Greater New York, Manhattan Health Plan, and Lancaster & Co.

As a shining beacon of hope, Karen Clark has made a difference through her tireless undaunted mission to improve the health of urban communities faced with diminished resources. I am pleased to introduce her to my House colleagues.

THE JOHNSTOWN ASSOCIATION OF LIFE UNDERWRITERS 75TH ANNI- VERSARY

HON. JOHN P. MURTHA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity before the House to congratulate the men and women of the Johnstown Association of Life Underwriters on its 75th anniversary.

JALU was founded in 1921. Since that time it has been a dedicated community service-oriented organization, coordinating numerous public service efforts over the years with the Salvation Army, the St. Vincent DePaul food banks, and New Day.

The organization, whose members are from Cambria, Somerset, and Bedford Counties in my home State of Pennsylvania, has won numerous national and state awards for public service throughout its existence. For the past 3 years, the JALU has been working to raise funds to establish the first scholarship fund for Cambria County Area Community College.

One of the most notable activities in which they engage annually is hosting a summer pic-

nic for underprivileged children. It means so much to those kids to know that these adults care about them—it makes such an impact on those young lives that I can't emphasize enough its importance. It's that kind of involvement in the community that we need more of and I want to applaud and thank this organization for its service in that regard.

I also want to applaud their tenacity in the face of economic hardship and corporate downsizing within the insurance industry because they've been able to keep their agencies open and continue to provide the kind of professional service the area needs and has come to rely on.

A CELEBRATION OF LIFE

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate my daughter and son-in-law, Angela McDonald Thomas and Juan Demeris Thomas, on the birth of their child, my new granddaughter, Ramia Regina McDonald Thomas. Ramia was born on Tuesday, July 23, 1996, at 10:07 p.m. at the Sutter Roseville Hospital in Roseville, CA, weighing 8 lbs., 4 oz., and 20.5 inches in length.

The relationship between grandmother and grandchild is a special one and the bond between grandmother and granddaughter is one that has been cherished by millions of women around the world. I shall love Ramia and cherish every moment that we spend together. I shall do my best to provide her with the benefit of whatever knowledge that I have gained over the years. I will share with her many good experiences, as well as those that I wish to forget and hopefully be a bridge to our family's past. Once Ramia is armed with the knowledge of her forebears, she can chart a course for her future.

In Africa, a family's wealth was judged by the number of children and grandchildren they had. By my heritage, I am a wealthy woman. I have five wonderful children, Valerie, Angela, Sherryl, Keith, my daughter-in-law Lori Blair McDonald, and son-in-law Juan Demeris Thomas of whom I am proud. They have blessed me with Ayanna Damaris McDonald Thomas, Myles Chandler Millender McDonald, Diamond Sequoia Short (adopted), and new Ramia, four wonderful grandchildren. My husband Jim and I thank God for each and every one of them and we will love them for as long as they shall live.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CLINICAL TRIALS FOR ENROLLEES OF FEDERAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing two bills to give Americans covered by Federal health insurance programs access to peer-reviewed clinical trials when no standard therapies are available to treat their very serious medical conditions.

The first bill would require the Medicare, Federal employee and military health plans, and the Department of Veterans Affairs to cover the medical costs associated with the clinical investigation. In addition, the bill ensures that Federal matching funds under Medicaid would be available to States electing to cover clinical trials in their Medicaid programs. Finally, the bill requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to make available information about on-going clinical investigations and the results of those studies.

The second bill is limited to a Medicare demonstration project covering clinical trials for cancer treatment.

Both bills stipulate that the Federal Government is only to pay for routine medical costs associated with the patient's treatment, such as hospital room and board, and radiology and laboratory services to monitor the patient's condition. The Federal Government would not be paying for the cost of the investigational agent itself.

Tragically, many patients must turn down these opportunities because they cannot afford to pay the routine costs associated with the clinical trial—a terrible irony, in my opinion, as these plans will cover the same medical treatment if it were provided as part of standard medical therapy.

Until a new therapy, technique or device is proven, many private payers of health care will cover the patient's medical costs. Therefore, I am pleased that one of my home State insurers, Aetna, has been a leader in working with researchers to pay some of the costs of patients enrolled in clinical studies. Such access gives these patients hope that their medical conditions may be improved or even cured, when no other door is open to them.

Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government already funds potentially life-saving clinical research every year, but bringing breakthroughs into standard medical practice requires these investigations. These initiatives back up the Federal Government's investment in the basic research with financial backing to bring these promises to fruition.

REPEAL OF THE BEER TAX

HON. RICHARD E. NEAL

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation which would reduce the excise tax on beer from \$18 to \$9 a barrel. The Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1990 doubled the excise tax on beer to \$18 a barrel. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 included provisions commonly referred to as "luxury taxes" on high-priced items such as boats, furs, and automobiles. All of these luxury taxes have been reviewed by Congress. For example, today we passed the Small Business Job Protection Act of 1996 which includes a phaseout of the luxury automobile excise tax. The automobile excise tax is the last luxury tax still in effect.

I believe it is time for Congress to look at a repeal of the beer tax. The tax increase of 1990 doubled the tax on beer. Currently, consumers pay 32.6 cents per six pack. This legislation would reduce the tax to 16.3 cents a six pack. The beer tax is an example of an excise tax which affects the average working American.