

Peck Ranch litigation. The only purpose of the language was to resolve the long-standing dispute regarding the allocation of the repayment responsibilities.

OPPOSITION TO THE FISCAL YEAR 1997 VA/HUD CONFERENCE REPORT

HON. SPENCER BACHUS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I joined 24 of my colleagues in opposing the fiscal year 1997 VA/HUD conference report. I want to be very clear that I strongly support our veterans. I voted for this legislation when the House passed its version earlier this year. But I could not, in good conscience vote for the conference report.

I voted against this bill for one reason and one reason only—this bill hurt some of the accounts most critical to our Nation's veterans. The House Veterans' Affairs Committee worked long and hard to produce a budget that maintained or increased almost every major VA account. Unfortunately, the final conference product cuts the House request of two of the most critical veterans programs while increasing funds for nonveterans programs.

The VA medical care account was cut by \$55 million over the House-passed version. As the VA struggles to offer consistent quality medical care to veterans, I am angry that these dollars are being spent by Americorps—a paid volunteer program which received \$400 million more than the House originally intended. Our veterans heeded the call of our country and risked their lives and their health in true service to the United States. They should not be asked to take a back seat to a program that has been criticized for mismanagement and waste.

The VA medical research account was cut \$15 million from the House passed legislation. Mr. Speaker, in addition VA's premier research efforts in areas such as spinal cord injury and blind rehabilitation, this cut hurts some of our newest and sickest veterans—those who have returned from Operation Desert Storm with bizarre service-connected illnesses ranging from chronic fatigue syndrome to cancer. On the heels of a long-overdue Pentagon admission that some of our troops were exposed to chemical weapons, we are trimming the very dollars that may have been used to improve treatment methods or quality of life for these soldiers.

I am an original cosponsor of a bill introduced by my colleague, the Honorable GLEN BROWDER creating an independent commission to study the use of chemical weapons in the gulf war. We must take the lessons of our sick veterans to ensure that future generations of soldiers are given the best opportunity to perform in an age of chemical warfare and still come home with their health.

The priorities of this conference report are skewed. While I understand that overall VA funding is increased over fiscal year 1996 dollars, I am disappointed that VA's medical mission has been slighted in the process. The wishes of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee should have been given more, not less, consideration.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE SCHOOL OF NURSING, UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND AT BALTIMORE, AND DR. BARBARA R. HELLER

HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the School of Nursing, University of Maryland at Baltimore and Dr. Barbara R. Heller, Dean of the School, as it breaks ground on a new building and marks an important milestone in the history of the institution, nursing education and the nursing profession.

The School of Nursing, ranked in the top 10 nationally and one of the largest institutions of nursing education in the country, is in the forefront of nursing education, research and clinical service. Students are provided with the knowledge and skills they need to practice in a dynamically changing, global health care marketplace.

The school targets critical local, State and national problems through research in such areas as the health of mothers and infants, drug abuse, oncology, geriatrics, school/child health, trauma/critical care, community health and AIDS prevention.

Through growing clinical practice initiatives, the school offers vital primary and preventive services throughout Maryland. While enriching the academic experience for many students, these affordable, accessible nurse-managed, community-based health centers served as models of health care delivery to underserved and uninsured populations.

I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting the efforts of the School of Nursing to refocus, redefine and reengineer nursing education. I also congratulate the faculty, students and staff as they break ground on a new facility, building the future of our Nation's health care delivery system through education.

LEGISLATION TO EXPAND CONDITIONS FOR VETERANS PRESUMED TO BE SERVICE CONNECTED DUE TO EXPOSURE TO IONIZING RADIATION

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to address an injustice that should be corrected at our earliest possible opportunity—the poor treatment of our Nation's atomic veterans.

There can be no question that atomic veterans were not adequately informed of the dangers of ionizing radiation and were injured as a result. Many of these men and women have paid for their dedication and bravery with their health and some with their lives. We owe it to them to see that they are not forgotten and that they receive the compensation for all of the illnesses that were incurred because of their service to our Nation. My legislation is but another step in ensuring that we fulfill our duty to them.

Recent developments have made a clear case for providing relief to these vets. The final report of the President's Advisory Committee on Human Radiation Experimentation more or less concluded that our Government has failed these brave men and women. The recommendations of the committee mirrored many of the concerns that the atomic veterans groups have had for years: that the list of presumptive diseases contained in law is inadequate, that the standard of proof to meet administrative claims is often impossible to meet, and that these statutes are limited and inequitable in their coverage.

I believe that Congress must provide the necessary leadership to ensure that these veterans' needs are met. My legislation is based on the precedent set by the Marshall Islands Nuclear Claims Tribunal Act, which provides relief for a number of presumptive diseases. Currently, Marshall Islanders receive compensation if they exhibit one or more of the 27 illnesses presumed radiogenic in nature. My legislation would ensure that all of the radiogenic illnesses that Marshall Islanders are compensated for are also on the presumptive list for our Nation's vets. Specifically, it would add bone cancer, cancer of the colon, nonmalignant thyroid nodular disease, parathyroid cancer, ovarian cancer, brain and central nervous system tumors, unexplained bone marrow failure and meningioma to the presumptive list.

This legislation will ensure that atomic veterans are treated properly, not as second-class citizens. It will also ensure that our Nation's policy on addressing the damage done by our Nation's nuclear weapons program is consistent. The least we can do is to make sure that veterans receive compensation for illnesses already determined by our Government to be linked to exposure to ionizing radiation. I urge my colleagues to sponsor this long-overdue legislation.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3666, DEPARTMENTS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS AND HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 24, 1996

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3666, the conference report on VA-Independent Agencies Appropriations for fiscal year 1997. I support this bill for many reasons but especially because it includes a provision that requires health insurance companies to cover 48 hours of hospital care for a woman after she gives birth.

Mr. Speaker, my constituent, Mrs. Maureen Drumm is a perfect example of why this practice of drive-through deliveries must be stopped.

On August 31, 1992, Maureen gave birth to her first daughter, Bridget Theresa. Bridget's first twenty-four hours of life were that of a normal, beautiful, healthy baby. However, approximately twenty-hours after Bridget was born, Maureen began to experience severe physical distress. Maureen had developed a

uterine infection, her temperature rose quickly to one hundred and four degrees, and she was in danger of lapsing into shock.

Mrs. Drumm's doctors immediately placed her on heavy doses of antibiotics and other intravenously administered medications. But, despite her doctor's best efforts, her fever persisted for 5 days at rates over one hundred degrees.

Although Maureen was quite ill, her greatest pain was not physical. Maureen was suffering mentally for her newborn daughter, Bridget. Approximately 48 hours after Bridget was born, she was moved to the intensive care unit. In a matter of hours, Bridget's bilirubin level—the yellow-brown bile pigment in the blood—had jumped from a normal level of 11 to a dangerous level of 19. Bilirubin levels in the twenties can cause bilirubin encephalopathy—a condition which causes permanent brain and nervous system damage. Bilirubin levels of over twenty-two require transfusions which replace all of the blood in the baby's body. Bridget Theresa was in great danger.

In time, Maureen's fever and Bridget's jaundice subsided because they were given high quality medical treatment and an adequate length of stay in the hospital. However, if they had been forced to leave twenty-four hours after Maureen gave birth—they would not have been so lucky. Mr. Speaker, forcing women and their newborn babies out of the hospital after 24 hours is cruel, barbaric, and extremely dangerous. If this policy of mandating "drive-through deliveries" was in effect in 1992, Bridget Theresa could be mentally retarded and Maureen could have died.

As you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, when Maureen became pregnant with her second child, she was quite nervous. Mrs. Drumm had learned that since her first delivery, her insurance company adopted a policy which required mothers and newborns be discharged from the hospital 24 hours after a "normal delivery." Well, Maureen did have a "normal delivery" with her first daughter Bridget Theresa. It was only after the first 24 hours that their conditions became obvious.

On July 26, 1995, Mrs. Drumm testified in front of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives Democratic Policy Committee. The next day Maureen received a phone call from Blue Cross/Blue Shield and was informed that because of her testimony, she would be pre-approved for a 48-hour stay in the hospital after giving birth. On August 3, 1995, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Philadelphia changed their policy to "Mother's Option"—which is 24 hours in the hospital and two home health care visits or 48 hours in the hospital.

On August 6, 1995, Maureen gave birth to her second child—a beautiful, healthy baby girl—Maura Elizabeth. Maura also had an elevated bilirubin level on her second day of life and was given immediate treatment. Since Maureen and Maura were able to stay a second day in the hospital, Maureen was well rested and able to care for Maura's jaundice at home over the course of the next few days. Today, both of Maureen's daughters are growing beautifully.

Mr. Speaker, since Maura's birth, Pennsylvania has joined a number of other States in making the option of a 48-hour hospital stay law. Now, we need to make it a Federal law.

Mr. Speaker, Maureen Drumm's efforts in educating us all in this dangerous "drive-

through delivery" practice should be commended. Maureen Drumm not only won a battle for herself, but for millions of women across this country. Although, many people would have been satisfied with being granted an extra day in the hospital for themselves, Maureen didn't stop there. Through many trips to Washington and many meetings with both Representatives and Senators, she has focused national attention on this issue, and has been a true leader in this fight for the rights of newborns and their mothers. Maureen Drumm has proven that one person really can make a difference. I congratulate Maureen Drumm and urge you to do the same by passing this important and vital legislation.

HONORING STEPHEN JEROME

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I wish to honor Stephen Jerome for his 30 years of ongoing commitment and service to the students and residents of the 18th Congressional District of New York, which I am proud to represent.

The name Stephen Jerome is synonymous with both educational leadership and dedication to community. As president of Monroe College, with campuses in both the Bronx and New Rochelle, Stephen Jerome has carried on his family's commitment to educating the young men and women of New York City and Westchester. His aunt, Mildred King, founded the school in 1933, and his father joined her 3 years later. Stephen came aboard as an instructor in 1966, and held various positions over the next 12 years before beginning his tenure as president in 1978.

It is fitting that as we honor Stephen Jerome on his 30th anniversary, Monroe College will honor his aunt by dedicating the recently acquired King Hall, which now houses the office of student services, as well as the learning center, gymnasium, and cafeteria.

Mr. Speaker, Stephen Jerome is not content to help only those students who pass through his institution's doors. He is a former member of the college presidents' council for the Governor's Office on New York State Financial Aid, former president of the Association of Proprietary Colleges in New York State, and a former commissioner of the Accrediting Commission of the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools.

Stephen Jerome's endeavors also extend beyond the educational sphere. He has worked to improve the ties between business and the community by serving as director of the Bronx Chamber of Commerce and then as president of the Fordham Road Area Development Corp. In addition, he routinely organizes neighborhood cleanup and improvement projects, and arranges an annual Christmas party for the children of his students.

Aside from his commitment to Monroe College and to his community, Steven is a dedicated husband and father. His wife, Leslie, is the director of career services at Monroe's New Rochelle campus. One son, Marc, is the director of the New Rochelle branch campus, and his other son, Evan, heads a television production company. Stephen's daughter, Lauren, works in public relations.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the friends, colleagues, and family of Stephen Jerome, I hereby express my heartfelt appreciation for his 30 years of service to Monroe College and the Bronx, and hope that he will continue to serve the institution and his community for many years to come.

A TRIBUTE TO PRISCILLA "PRILL" KUHN

HON. ED PASTOR

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 25, 1996

Mr. PASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a woman whose sense of compassion, community dedication, and entrepreneurial skill makes her one of Arizona's most well-respected citizens, Ms. Priscilla "Prill" Kuhn. Ms. Kuhn has dedicated her life to improving the lives of the underprivileged and disadvantaged, and thousands of Arizonans are living happier, healthier lives because of her hard work. Her altruism, quiet brilliance, dauntless energy and many friends have enabled her to fulfill her unique vision of building responsive communities for the members of our society most in need of advocates and protectors: our children, our elderly, and our disabled.

Throughout her career, Prill has continued to develop her communication skills, her understanding of resource development, and her network of friends. Subsequently in 1985, she was able to pursue her dream of establishing her own business, Netwest Development Corp., in Tucson, AZ. As president and chief executive officer of Netwest, Prill incorporated her belief in positive community activism into every aspect of the business.

Although Netwest has become a multi-million dollar organization with 230 employees and provides over 1,000 multifamily, retirement and assisted-living units, Prill's vision of a caring, responsive community pervades.

Prill provides an immeasurable resource to the many boards and committees on which she sits. Her fundraising abilities are legendary. For her work, she has received many awards and recognitions including the Northwood University Distinguished Women's Award, Roots and Wings Human Betterment Award, Amity Foundation President's Award, International Who's Who of Professional & Business Women. The list goes on.

In addition to her career and public service accomplishments, Prill's dedication to her family is also commendable. With her loving husband, Dr. Martin C. Kuhn, Prill raised three wonderful children: Katherine Edith Ruth Kuhn Fletcher Truman Kuhn, and Clifford Seymour Kuhn. She is also the guardian of her two young nieces, Patience Gabrielle Purdy and Josephine Elizabeth Seymour Lane, and she is grandmother to Jamal Truman Salah and Anna Priscilla Salah.

I close this tribute to Priscilla "Prill" Kuhn by thanking her for the difference she has made in the lives of many Arizonans. Prill's entrepreneurial spirit, sense of community responsibility, and love of family make her an outstanding citizen of this country.