

## TRIBUTE TO MARY EVA GOMEZ

HON. ESTEBAN EDWARD TORRES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Mary Eva Gomez, a special woman who has spent much of her life working for the betterment of her community.

Mary Eva was born to Juan and Laura Gutierrez on February 28, 1931, in Hanover, NM. Her early education was spent in the Grant County schools until she moved on to St. Mary's Academy, where she graduated from high school. While in New Mexico, Mary Eva began her community involvement. She became an accomplished violinist, which earned her a seat with the Grant County Symphony in 1951 and 1952. She also served as organist and choir master for Holy Family Catholic Church in Hanover.

Mary Eva and her husband Ramon, whom she married in 1949, moved to California in 1957, settling in Pico Rivera in 1964. She and her husband have 6 children and 11 grandchildren.

Mary Eva has served as a strong advocate for the children of the El Rancho Unified School District. From 1964 to the present, she has taken an interest in the education that the children of Pico Rivera receive. From attending countless Parent Teacher Association meetings to serving as a distinguished member of the district board of education, Mary Eva has demonstrated her genuine concern for the children of the community.

Mary Eva has served her community in many other ways. She is an active member in the Pio Pico Women's Club, a member of Auxiliary V.F.W. Post 7734, and an educator and minister at St. Hilary's Catholic Church for which she raised \$1,500 for its food for the homeless project. This is only a fraction of her community involvement.

Although her accomplishments are many, her work on the El Rancho Unified School District Board of Education from 1981 through 1995 is what most deserves notice, and commendation. Her presence will be sorely missed but her deeds will be dearly remembered.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and honor that I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Mary Eva Gomez, a special friend, energetic public servant and community leader, an individual who has given so generously to so many.

## THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS BILL

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to insert my Washington Report for Wednesday, February 14, 1996, into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

## THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS BILL

With my support, Congress this month enacted into law a sweeping telecommunications reform bill, the most far-reaching measure passed by this Congress. It affects services that virtually every American uses and which generate hundreds of billions of

dollars annually. The bill, which President Clinton has signed into law, is the culmination of several years of efforts to reform the nation's telecommunication laws, which were last comprehensively rewritten in 1934. There has long been broad consensus that those laws were outdated, failing to take into account rapidly advancing technology, but often vast disagreement about how best to change them.

## WHAT DOES THE LAW DO?

Many telecommunications services are currently provided by highly regulated monopolies. Often, competition has been expressly prohibited: for example, local phone companies cannot provide cable TV, and vice versa. The purpose of the new law is to create one giant marketplace for telecommunications services. It aims to end monopolies, allowing largely deregulated competition. The goal is to expand consumers' choices while lowering their costs, spurring innovation along the way.

Phone service: The breakup of the Bell system in 1984 generally prohibited one company from offering both local and long-distance service to the same customers. The new law eliminates those barriers, requiring local phone companies to open up their networks to competitors, including long-distance companies. Once there is competition, local phone companies could offer long-distance services to their subscribers. In addition, public utilities, like electric companies, will now be permitted to provide telecommunications services through a separate subsidiary.

The bill contains protections for rural communities, which may see less competition because of the high cost of providing service to these areas. The law allows the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and states to order carriers to provide quality phone service at reasonable rates in rural areas, and exempts small phone companies from some requirements if they prove economically burdensome. In addition, the bill prohibits "slamming"—the practice of duping customers into unwittingly switching their long-distance carrier.

Television: The new law permits phone companies to offer cable service and allows television networks to own cable systems. It also deregulates cable television rates over the next three years, except for basic service. Some current restrictions on the number of radio and television stations that one company may own are relaxed.

Congress deferred final action on the contentious issue of advanced television services, such as high-definition TV. Broadcasters argue that they need additional broadcast spectrum in order to make the transition to high-definition TV, while phone companies and cable operators argue that broadcasters should have to pay for any additional spectrum.

V-chip: The law requires all newly manufactured TVs with 13-inch or larger screens to include a "v-chip." Broadcasters have one year to voluntarily establish rules for rating video programming that contains sexual, violent, or indecent material and to transmit such ratings during broadcasts. The v-chip would then enable parents to block objectionable programming from their TV sets.

Computing: The new law bars the transmission of obscene materials to minors over a computer network. Violators could be punished with up to two years in jail and fines as high as \$250,000 for an individual and \$500,000 for a company. The law protects providers of on-line service, like America Online, from prosecution if their systems are merely the means by which someone transmits the indecent material. The law also endorses efforts by software companies to de-

sign programs that parents and others can use to block objectionable material.

## OUTLOOK

The new law is a watershed in U.S. telecommunications policy. The transition from highly controlled monopolies to competition is likely to be bumpy at times, and the effects will not be the same for all consumers. Some companies are better positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities, and some industries and regions of the country are likely to see fiercer competition than others. In the short term we may see more joint ventures and mergers, as companies that were previously barred from entering each other's business are now able to cooperate. The end result may be a handful of industry giants, each of which offers the customer a wide range of information and entertainment services.

The new laws breaks down barriers that have existed for decades and sets off a competitive free-for-all. Consumers who find themselves annoyed by frequent solicitations to change their long-distance carriers are in for more of the same, as expanded choices become available in cable and local phone service. But greater competition is likely to drive prices down over time, and companies will have to innovate in order to compete.

The law, of course, does not please everyone. Many computer users and advocates of free speech protest that it places unconstitutional restrictions on speech. Consumer groups warn that cable and telephone services could be more expensive.

The challenge Congress faced in writing this law was to establish a level playing field for all providers of telecommunication services, ensuring that no one provider would become so dominant as to establish a new, and unregulated, monopoly. I am optimistic that the new law will do that, but I also agree with those who say that none of us can predict precisely how it will play out. While the bill goes far to break down barriers to competition, and junks volumes of regulations, the final product leaves many issues to the FCC. My strong suspicion is that the bill does not deregulate the industry as much as some proponents claim. I believe that Congress must keep a close watch to ensure that the promise of the new law is realized, and be prepared to take action if consumers are adversely affected.

In the end, this bill was finally pushed forward because the congressional leadership desperately wanted a major legislative achievement to point to. And it was accomplished through a genuinely bipartisan effort, involving congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle and the Clinton Administration. The lesson we should learn is that fostering consensus across party lines is the way to get things done. I hope that we see more of that in the days ahead.

## HONORING AFRICAN-AMERICANS

HON. OWEN B. PICKETT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. PICKETT. Mr. Speaker, as we again celebrate Black History Month, it is important to take note of the profound influence that African-Americans have had on American history and American society.

From the early days of our Republic when much of our country's economy rested on the backs of slave labor, to the complex commercialism of modern America the thread of black history has steadily grown and expanded.

While much remains to be done to achieve equal opportunity that is more than just a phrase or slogan we can still take pride in the stunning achievements made by so many African-Americans that has often been overlooked in our recorded history.

These contributions have covered the spectrum of cultural, economic, political, and scientific advances that are widely heralded and well known, but many others, less publicized, have equal significance to society.

African-Americans comprise about 12 percent of our population and are our largest minority group. We need but look around us, in our workplace, in entertainment, sports, politics, religion, sciences, education, and throughout our daily lives to understand the importance of their accomplishments.

I realize that the celebration of Black History Month has origins that go back much farther than the formal program we celebrate today which originated in 1976. It was Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who in 1926 first began setting aside a period of time in February to recall the now voluminous heritage, achievements, and contributions of African-Americans.

Singling out any one person or achievement without also giving equal acknowledgment to the many others of equal fame or public acknowledgment would not do justice to the rich history of one of our Nation's most important minority groups.

I join all Americans in saluting Black History Month 1996.

#### TRIBUTE TO RODNEY SLATER

HON. EARL F. HILLIARD

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. HILLIARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Mr. Rodney Slater, President Clinton's Federal Highway Administrator. Recently, Mr. Slater was of great assistance to the small rural community of Gee's-Bend, AL, in authorizing a new ferryboat to replace the one dismantled by segregationists in 1962 in order to keep many civil rights protesters from easily crossing the Alabama River to march in the streets of Camden for their freedom.

Mr. Slater and his staff at the Federal Highway Administration actually understood the need of these citizens to help transport their families across the Alabama River to the county seat of Wilcox County in Camden, AL, in a timely manner. Rather than acting like an impersonal bureaucratic machine, Mr. Slater's office responded with kindness and understanding.

Since 1962, the predominately African-American citizens of Gee's-Bend have had to travel over 1 hour, each way, to visit their doctor, hospital, bank, and for their children to attend the public schools of the county due to the closing of the ferryboat.

However, the arduous journey of these good people will soon be shortened from over 1 hour each way, to only 10 minutes each way, due to the wisdom of Administrator Slater. Mr. Slater took such an interest as to personally visit the proposed site of the new ferry to ensure that the project was needed and worthy of our taxpayers' support.

President Clinton should be commended in selecting such an upstanding man of honor,

integrity, and fairplay as Mr. Slater. He is a friend of all lovers of freedom, democracy, and equality.

#### TRIBUTE TO OCEAN COUNTY FREEHOLDER JAMES J. MANCINI

HON. JIM SAXTON

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. SAXTON. It is an honor and a privilege to pay tribute to my good friend, Ocean County Freeholder and long-time mayor of Long Beach Township, James J. Mancini.

Freeholder Jim Mancini, as chairman of the Ocean County Office on Aging, serves the largest senior population in the State of New Jersey. Ocean County's nutrition sites, transportation programs for the elderly, and senior outreach programs are considered among the finest in our State. Freeholder Mancini has worked closely with me through the years in our effort to preserve and protect such programs as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. His support has been invaluable.

As liaison to the Ocean County Library Commission, Freeholder Mancini has worked tirelessly to expand the system to 17 branches throughout the county.

A former member of New Jersey's General Assembly, he continues to serve as mayor of Long Beach Township, a position he has held for 28 years. This dedicated public servant also serves as chairman of the board of Southern Ocean County Hospital and as vice president of the Long Beach Island, St. Francis Community Center. The civic associations to which he has devoted many hours are too numerous to mention.

All these associations and activities were carried out while always putting his wife, Madeline, and their nine children first.

The residents of Long Beach Township pay him a great tribute by dedicating their municipal facility in his honor and name.

Jim Mancini represents what is so very good about our country—he is an honorable man, a family man, a man who is willing to go the extra mile for what is right. He has proven the point of the old saying, "If you want something done, give the job to a busy person."

I offer him my personal thanks and the gratitude of all those he has so faithfully served throughout the years.

As he celebrates his 70th birthday among family and friends, I wish him all the best that life can offer.

#### TRIBUTE TO WILLIAM D. SHAW

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to ask that you and my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives join me in paying tribute to Dr. William D. Shaw.

Dr. Shaw is being honored by his many family members and friends on March 2, 1996, for his 33 years of service and dedication to the field of education. Dr. Shaw began his career in 1962 as a teacher in the Concord Pub-

lic School District of Michigan. He continued in numerous teaching and administrative positions in Concord before moving on to East Lansing, MI, where he became an instructor at Michigan State University. In 1974 he joined the staff of Bedford Public Schools as director of instruction. Fortunately, in 1978 he moved to the Swartz Creek community schools. During his years of serving the students of Swartz Creek he held the positions of assistant superintendent for instruction and assistant superintendent for instruction and business operations. Dr. Shaw has maintained an involvement in his profession through membership in numerous county and State associations. Additionally, he has served as an adjunct lecturer at both Michigan State University and Central Michigan University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and all my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in congratulating Dr. William D. Shaw on his retirement from 33 years to the field of education and wish he and his wife Mary the very best in retirement.

#### SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO GERALD "JERRY" PROPHET

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, February 28, 1996*

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize one of Michigan's most distinguished and devoted police officers. Sgt. Gerald "Jerry" Prophet is retiring from the Michigan State Police on February 29, 1996, after 24 years of commitment to preserve the safety of the citizens of Michigan. He is being honored for his exceptional service on March 2, 1996, at the Candlelight Banquet Center in Bridgeport, MI.

Sergeant Prophet was born in Heflin, AL, on July 31, 1947. His family moved to Michigan when he was a young boy and he graduated from Ferndale High School in 1965. Jerry joined the Michigan State Police in 1972 and rose to the rank of sergeant. He always places protecting the citizens of Michigan over himself which is a tribute to his honorable service. His dedication to the needs of the people of Michigan and his fellow officers earned him the thanks and respect he so much deserves.

An example of his dedication and one of the most notable aspects of his career was when he received a life saving award from the Michigan State Police. Jerry responded to an urgent call and rushed to the home of a Michigan citizen who stopped breathing. He performed CPR and ultimately saved her life.

Despite his demanding schedule, Jerry is also committed to the spirituality of his community. He serves on the usher board and is a member of the men's club and the courtesy committee at Bethel AME Church in Saginaw.

Sergeant Prophet not only served the people of Michigan, but served his country as well. Before joining the Michigan State Police, he served in the Navy and was stationed in China Lake, CA, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1970 with the rank of yeoman 2d class.

Never losing sight of the importance of education and learning, Sergeant Prophet received an associate degree from Delta College in 1978 and is expected to graduate with