

As founder and president of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, Rabbi Schneier has met with Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers, as well as religious leaders in the former Soviet Union, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Romania, Argentina, Cuba, Israel, Egypt, Morocco, Bulgaria, Germany, England, Ireland, the Vatican, and Turkey.

Since 1965, when he led a group of political and religious leaders for an Appeal of Conscience rally protesting religious repression in the Soviet Union, he has championed the cause of religious freedom around the world. After the 1965 rally, he established the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, which continues to this day to provide effective and influential leadership on behalf of human rights.

The Appeal of Conscience Foundation and Rabbi Schneier have been involved in a wide range of the world's most intractable problems and most egregious human rights violations. From meeting with Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev to discuss United States-Russian relations to meetings with Presidents of Bosnia, Serbia, and Croatia to discuss a lasting peace in that troubled region, Rabbi Schneier has taken it upon himself to provide inspirational and effective leadership that has won him worldwide praise, including the prestigious Vienna Prize.

It brings me great pleasure to rise today to honor this exceptional religious leader on the occasion of his receiving this most deserved award. I invite my colleagues to join me in expressing our appreciation for his extraordinary efforts.

FIGHT TERRORISM, BUT DON'T DAMAGE INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, we all have been shocked and horrified by the acts of terrorism in Oklahoma City, in New York City, in Israel, London, Tokyo, and elsewhere.

The painful loss of innocent lives leaves us with a terrible sense of vulnerability that tears away at our peace of mind.

There are laws on the books that prosecute terrorists for the violent acts they commit—the World Trade Center bombing trial and the trial that will soon get underway in Denver, CO, show us that. We should also carefully strengthen our ability to prevent these acts of terror. But this bill doesn't get us where we need to go.

As Anthony Lewis wrote Monday in the New York Times:

Terrorism has a cost beyond its menace to life and peace. A democratic society, feeling threatened, may put aside legal norms and adopt authoritarian measures. It may fear freedom.

This approach doesn't take us forward. It takes us back to the now-discredited ideas of the McCarthy Era, and even more recently, to the intimidating FBI interviews with Arab-American leaders during the gulf war about their supposed knowledge of possible terrorist activities, and to the "LA 8" case with its attendant revelation of secret Justice Department contingency plans for the mass roundup, internment, and deportation of Arab nationals.

When this bill first came to the floor, it would have given us selective prosecution, more wiretaps, more domestic counterintelligence, deportation of political asylum seekers, and secret evidence to be used in secret trials. While some of these problems have been corrected, the bill is still fatally flawed.

We are debating this issue in tense times, with the recent bombings in Israel still fresh in our minds. These were terrible tragedies, and we should respond, but we should do so with clear minds, with a view that values the liberties that so many have fought and died for over our history as a nation.

Mr. Speaker, let us not cast freedom aside and allow fear to prevail. We can do better than this bill, and we must, for our liberty and our safety depend on it.

WOMEN IN HEALTH CARE

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of all women in the health care field.

As the health care industry continues to change dramatically and rapidly, these professionals remain steadfast in their dedication to the well-being of the aged and infirm. They work hard to keep up with the changing market, while unfailingly remaining committed to helping the sick.

And no matter what their position, everyone contributes in an essential way. I honor the efforts made by all women in all roles in providing the best quality work toward meeting the needs of patients.

When I read today the Northern New Jersey Visiting Nurses Association's newsletter, I was reminded of the challenges facing our health care workers. Their mission: Keeping people healthy by providing quality community health service by skilled and caring individuals and promoting the health and well-being of the entire community.

Nursing in particular demands such a broad array of skills and knowledge combined with attributes of compassion and commitment. From many of the health care professionals with whom I am acquainted, I know of the extraordinary job they do at continually re-educating themselves in medicine, disease, and an ever-changing, high-technology environment, while never losing sight of their most important responsibility—the health and well-being of their patients.

This sense of duty is astonishing. I was recently told of a home health aide who during the January blizzard, when so many of us were home and safe, walked a couple of miles through 5-foot snowdrifts to care for her patient and walked home. I was told of the health workers who stayed 2 or 3 consecutive days working extra shifts at the hospital to meet the needs of patients. Mr. Speaker, I applaud them.

These are truly multitalented individuals who fill an essential role in our communities. Their job not only requires strong leadership and skill, but also a heart and soul unfamiliar to many of us. Today I rise to honor them—those individuals who help us stay healthy and serve us when in need.

LEGISLATION AMENDING THE FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

HON. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to allow professional services firms which contract with the Federal Government to pay their professional employees on an hourly basis or a salary basis, without defeating their exemption from overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The FLSA exempts from overtime requirements professional employees who meet a duties test laid out by the Department of Labor's regulations under the act. Professional employees must also be paid on a salary basis, meaning that they must be paid on a salary or fee basis but not on the basis of number of hours worked. If the employee does not meet the duties test for a professional or the salary basis test, the Department of Labor and the courts have held that the employee is not exempt from overtime and therefore must be paid time-and-a-half for all hours worked over 40 within a 7-day period.

When the Federal Government contracts with private firms for professional services, most requests for proposals for such contracts require that the contractor submit bids as to the fee for the professional services that are based on hourly rates. However, because the contractor must bid the contracts on an hourly basis and, as a practical matter, calculate the pay of the professional employees working on the contract on an hourly basis, these employees may not meet the requirements for the overtime exemption under the act.

In addition to adversely affecting contractors, the salary basis requirement under the regulations can have the effect of requiring overtime pay for well-compensated, highly skilled employees, many of whom are lawyers, certified public accountants and financial analysts—simply because the employer compensates the employee on an hourly basis, as opposed to a salary basis.

This legislation will enable those firms contracting with the Federal Government to pay their employees in the manner which meets the requirements of the contract without running afoul of the FLSA.

EAST CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL'S OVERALL EXCELLENCE AWARD

HON. FRANK TEJEDA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. TEJEDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to East Central High School, a school in my district, for being recognized by Redbook magazine for overall excellence in its America's Best Schools Project competition. East Central High School is 1 of 63 schools nationwide recognized for its overall excellence in academics and extra-curricular activities.

This distinction truly an accomplishment for which everyone connected to East Central High School should be proud. I applaud the faculty, school administrators, and staff for their dedication beyond the call of duty to provide the best education to their students. This

is what has earned this school the recognition in Redbook. The students of East Central who have worked hard to learn and excel equally deserve praise. Last year, more than 800 students at the school brought home hard-won awards in a variety of disciplines. The parents of these students, who dedicate themselves to creating new and greater learning opportunities for their children, deserve our recognition.

East Central High School draws from both urban and rural areas, being the only high school in a school district that spans 260 square acres. The area has a low tax base, and the school and the community came together to overcome financial challenges. They did so by creating a foundation to raise funds and provide incentive grants to teachers to create new, exciting programs to challenge and excite students. In this way, parents, teachers, administrators, and members of the community have created a wide variety of choices to excite the students and to encourage them to get involved.

East Central's innovative efforts set a positive example to everyone whose goal is to enrich the lives of our children. Examples of this unique programming are impressive, as well as abundant. East Central students taking French are communicating with students in France using the Minitel, the French electronic information system. Students interested in hospitality management are receiving first-hand experience through mentoring programs at a local Marriott Hotel. Restructured English and history classes have spurred student interest to pursue these subjects beyond the required courses. New daily class schedules help students learn more with time for extra-curricular activities. Extended library hours and an after-school tutoring program fosters a complete learning environment.

Greater student achievement has been the result. The number of students on the honor roll each 9-week period increased dramatically while the student failure rate has decreased. Students have won local, regional, State, national, and international awards in history, science, literature, and agriculture. A student at East Central placed third at the International Conference for Science in Toronto, Canada. The school's one-act play took the district trophy for the first time in 10 years. Nine students placed in the U.I.L. Literary region 4 contests. The school's basketball team ranks first in the State of Texas.

I am greatly impressed by the spirit at East Central. Overcoming financial and geographic obstacles, the entire community created and continues to create a positive educational center for its students. The ability to think creatively, to put new ideas to the test, has paid off. East Central stands as an example of what a community can accomplish—not alone—but together.

THE FAST AND EFFICIENT TAX FILING ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER COX

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 14, 1996

Mr. COX of California. Mr. Speaker, many Government rules and regulations now on the books are obsolete and just plain burdensome. Today, with bipartisan support, and in

behalf of taxpayers across the Nation, I am introducing the Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act to correct one of these obsolete regulations.

Every April 15, thousands of Americans nationwide wait in long lines at the U.S. Postal Service to mail their tax returns and receive their registered mail receipts which prove that their documents were mailed on time. So even though the tax documents might arrive at the Internal Revenue Service 2 or 3 days after the due date, it is counted as being delivered on the date of the registered mail receipt. This is a good rule—it gives taxpayers peace of mind that they will not be fined or penalized if the Postal Service takes longer than expected to deliver the documents.

However, like so many other things, the devil is in the details. This timely-mailing-as-timely-filing rule applies only to documents delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. So if the same taxpayer sent his or her tax documents on the due date via Federal Express, United Parcel Service, or some other reliable private delivery service, the timely-mailing-as-timely-filing rule would not apply, and the tax documents would be considered officially late.

The timely-mailings-as-timely-filing rule was written at a time when only the U.S. Postal Service delivered mail. Today, it doesn't make any sense to limit the timely-mailing-as-timely-filing provision just to documents delivered by the U.S. Postal Service when many alternative methods are much more reliable and quicker.

The Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act will correct this inequity by permitting the Secretary of the Treasury to expand the timely-mailing-as-timely-filing rule to include qualified private delivery services. This would both increase the efficiency of the IRS and make it easier for taxpayers to file their tax returns on time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to introduce into the RECORD letters of endorsement for the Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act from the National Taxpayers Union, the United Parcel Service, and even from a former IRS Commissioner.

I invite my colleagues to cosponsor this important bill, so that we may make life a bit easier for millions of American taxpayers.

NATIONAL TAXPAYERS UNION,
Alexandria, VA, March 7, 1996.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER COX,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN COX: The 300,000-member National Taxpayers Union strongly supports your Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act, which would permit the Secretary of the Treasury to designate qualified delivery services for purposes of timely filing of tax documents with the Internal Revenue Service and Tax Court.

Many aspects of the Internal Revenue Code and its enforcement seem outmoded and inconsistent, but few are as archaic as the policy on the filing of tax documents. Few taxpayers are aware of the fact that the IRS will only accept a receipt from the U.S. Postal Service as evidence that a document was delivered to the tax agency on time. Every year many citizens have been placed in financial peril simply because they made a reasonable assumption that a receipt from a delivery service was adequate.

With the onset of the Information Age, many national delivery services have proven to be more reliable than the U.S. Postal Service. Indeed, private companies from law firms to financial industries often entrust Federal Express, United Parcel Service, and

many others to quickly deliver documents upon which their livelihoods depend. Yet, current IRS policy forces taxpayers to patronize the postal monopoly.

Your legislation would also make the filing of important documents more convenient for taxpayers who do not have easy access to a Post Office, or do not have time to wait in long lines for Registered Mail receipts. Private delivery firms can provide the personalized, door-to-door service many citizens prefer.

A federal appeals court in San Francisco recently upheld a lower court ruling that the judicial branch cannot compel the IRS to recognize the receipts of reputable delivery services. According to the ruling, while a taxpayer may "put forth what may be a legitimate policy rationale for extending the rule to private delivery services, it is for Congress, not the courts, to make such a change."

For this reason, taxpayers are now looking to Congress to remove this onerous and pointless compliance burden. Congress should modernize the tax filing law by enacting the Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act.

Sincerely,

DAVID KEATING,
Executive Vice President.

UNITED PARCEL SERVICE,
Washington, DC, March 13, 1996.

Hon. CHRISTOPHER COX,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN COX: United Parcel Service (UPS) strongly supports passage of the "Fast Efficient Tax Filing Act" with its goal of expanding the current timely-filing rule to include private companies. The bill would not only allow the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) to receive important documents as promptly as possible but would provide the flexibility to UPS customers to file their tax documents through a carrier of their choosing.

The information age has brought about a transformation in the way business is conducted. Consumers are continuously looking for new choices to meet their constantly changing needs. UPS alone has over 1.3 million daily pick-up customers and delivers nearly 12 million parcels and documents on a daily basis.

Private companies such as UPS present convenient and more reliable alternatives to the Postal Service. UPS offers time definite express services which would ensure the timely filing of tax documents with the IRS. In addition, UPS has the infrastructure and technology to track vital documents through its system to the final destination. These are the types of services taxpayers are looking for when dealing with the IRS.

The current IRS policy requires taxpayers to patronize the Postal Service when filing their tax returns. This is not only inconvenient for those who do not have easy access to a Post Office, but it unfairly treats private sector companies by creating an unlevel playing field between the Postal Service and its competitors.

A federal appeals court in San Francisco recently ruled that there is a legitimate policy rationale for extending the timely-mailing-as-timely-filing rule to private delivery companies but left the matter up to Congress to resolve. The time is ripe for reforming this unfair rule which does not serve the needs of society. On behalf of all taxpayers, we urge Congress to pass the Fast and Efficient Tax Filing Act.

Sincerely,

ARNIE WELLMAN,
Vice President,
Corporate Public Affairs.