

Please let me know if we can be of further assistance on this or any other issue.

Sincerely,

WENDY R. SHERMAN,
Assistant Secretary,
Legislative Affairs.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it was necessary for me to return to my district on Thursday, March 14, before the final vote of the day was taken. I would have voted "yes" on H.R. 2854 on instructing the conferees to extend the reserve conservation program.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY OF TROOP 232 OF THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon with great pride to acknowledge an outstanding organization in Midland, TX—Troop 232 of the Boy Scouts of America is celebrating its golden anniversary and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate them on this distinguished milestone.

Scout master Cliff Hogue started Troop 232 in 1946, and thanks to his efforts and the efforts of so many fine young men and their families, Troop 232 has reached this impressive record of a half-century of achievement. In the last 12 years, nearly 40 young men of Troop 232 have been awarded the prestigious Eagle Scout Award. In celebrating its golden anniversary, Troop 232 is not only paying tribute to its longevity, but it is recognizing a commitment to leadership and excellence.

As a former Boy Scout myself, I am well aware of the valuable role this organization plays in providing our youth with the necessary tools to become outstanding leaders. The Boy Scouts remind us of all that is good in America, and Troop 232, through its unwavering dedication to that organization's noble principles, has enriched the lives of hundreds of young men and given its community a legacy of which to be proud.

Congratulations Troop 232. May your success continue as you begin your second half-century.

LEGISLATION TO BENEFIT REEMPLOYED VETERANS

HON. BARBARA F. VUCANOVICH

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mrs. VUCANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 [USERRA] increased the protections afforded our service men and women who leave a civilian job for qualified military service. In addition to assuring these

returning veterans that their jobs would be waiting for them when they return, under USERRA a returning veteran is also eligible to have his or her pension, profit-sharing and other related benefits restored. These are the benefits that would have accrued, but for the employee's absence due to qualified military service.

The problem is, under the Internal Revenue Code [IRC], overall limits are placed on contributions and benefits under certain retirement plans. Thus the employer-sponsored pension and savings plan rights given to returning veterans by USERRA are taken away by existing rules in the IRC. If the conflicts between USERRA and the IRC are not corrected, aggrieved veterans will have to bring suit against employers to enforce their rights under USERRA. Relying on litigation to resolve this situation would benefit no one—not the courts, not employers, and certainly not veterans.

Today I am introducing the Veterans Reemployment Benefits Protection Act to allow veterans to received the benefits Congress intended to give them when it enacted USERRA. This legislation makes technical amendments to the IRC to allow returning veterans and their employers to make make-up contributions as authorized by USERRA.

Language similar to this legislation was included in the Balanced Budget Act of 1995, H.R. 2491, as passed by the House. I have added minor technical changes to the language in H.R. 2491 at the suggestion of the Treasury Department.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will agree that this much-needed technical correction to the IRC should be passed expeditiously, either as part of a larger bill or even on its own. The dedicated young men and women who leave their jobs and families to serve in the U.S. military deserve nothing less.

ALCOHOL LABELING ACT

HON. PATRICIA SCHROEDER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, today I and my colleagues are reintroducing the Alcohol Labeling Act, which would require makers of alcoholic beverages to label each beverage container with a list of the ingredients and calories, as well as the alcohol, it contains.

This low-cost proposal establishes the unit of serving size called the drink. One drink contains 0.6 ounces of alcohol—the amount usually found in one beer, one shot of distilled spirits, or one glass of wine.

The only cost to U.S. taxpayers will be \$500,000 for a toll-free number, which would provide referral help for those with a drinking problem. This number and the required information would be legibly printed on each container.

Labeling for alcoholic beverages was not part of the nutrition labeling requirements mandated for food products in 1990. As a result, we are still burdened with an alcohol labeling law that dates from the Prohibition era. It is inconsistent that the alcohol contents of wine and distilled spirits must be disclosed, while producers of beer and malt liquor have the option of listing their ingredients on their labels.

This bill would correct that inconsistency, while providing young consumers, diabetics, and others with diet-sensitive conditions with information on what they are consuming.

I am especially concerned about the increasing problem of teenage binge drinking. This bill would give young, inexperienced drinkers user-friendly information on beverage potency and a standard gauge of the impairment caused by an alcoholic beverage. Informed teens are more likely to avoid death from overdose.

In the 103d Congress, this legislation received the support of groups ranging from the Academy of Pediatrics, to the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists, to the National Parent Teacher Association, to the Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco.

Providing consumers with the information they need to make informed decisions about drinking is a sound first step in reforming our national alcohol policy.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting ingredient labeling on alcoholic beverages. As individuals, we need this information to be more responsible in our use of alcohol. As a nation, we must end marketing practices that mislead and target our youth.

AMERICA MUST STAND BY TAIWAN

HON. BILL BAKER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mr. BAKER of California. Mr. Speaker, on March 23, the people of Taiwan will hold an event we in this country much too often take for granted: a free election. As Americans, we share in their pride and hopeful anticipation of this great celebration of liberty.

At the same time, we must condemn the actions of the Mainland Chinese in attempting to intimidate the Taiwanese people. The efforts of the dictators in Beijing to somehow frighten the people of Taiwan into postponing their election have failed, and have again reminded the world of what the raw and sordid face of Marxist totalitarianism looks like.

Recently I met on Capitol Hill with Mr. Chen Rong-jye, Deputy Representative of the government of Taiwan. Mr. Chen holds the second-ranking position in the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States, the equivalent of the Taiwanese Embassy—since formal American recognition of the Communist government in Beijing, Taiwan has had no formal embassy in the United States. We discussed China's military actions in the vicinity of Taiwan's coastline, and Mr. Chen showed me on a map how close the Communist Chinese had come in their missile exercises to two major Taiwanese ports.

I was honored that Mr. Chen came to the Hill to meet with me and discuss the Taiwanese situation. Communist China's crude bullying of Taiwan has failed to sway the commitment of the Taiwanese people to democratic elections later this month, and I fully endorse their brave determination to stand for liberty, and also am strongly supportive of the recent placement of U.S. naval ships in the waters near Taiwan.

In addition, I am proud to be an original co-sponsor of the nonbinding House Concurrent

Resolution 148, a resolution that states, in part, that "the United States, in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act and the constitutional process of the United States, and consistent with its friendship with and commitment to the democratic government and people of Taiwan, should assist in defending them against invasion, missile attack, or blockade by the People's Republic of China."

Other key supporters of this resolution include House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH, International Relations Committee Chairman BENJAMIN GILMAN (R-NY), House Majority Leader DICK ARMEY, and House Majority Whip TOM DELAY.

Ronald Reagan once reminded us that "we are a people with a government, not the other way around." The people of Taiwan understand this fundamental truth in a way the aging tyrants in Beijing perhaps never will, which is all the more reason for the United States to uphold our longtime friends on Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO CLARIFY THAT FREQUENT FLIER MILEAGE IS NOT TAX- ABLE

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mrs. KENNELLY. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to clarify that frequent flier mileage is not taxable. I believe that frequent flier miles are not taxable under current law. However, in light of the Internal Revenue Service's recent advice in technical advice memorandum 9547001 and despite the fact that technical advice memorandums only apply to a given taxpayer and set of circumstances, I feel a clarification is necessary.

The technical advice memorandum would require employers that permit employees to use frequent flier miles for personal trips to report as income on workers' W-2 forms the full cost of plane tickets that led to the accumulation of the frequent flier miles. This simply makes no sense.

This is one of those areas where taxation would raise a myriad of questions for which there is no single correct answer such as appropriate timing—would miles be taxed when earned or when used; valuation—is mile earned from a credit card equal to a mile earned by flying a particular airline—what is the correct value of a ticket or a free upgrade in light of the fact that any given flight has a myriad of service classes; segregation—do employees have to try and keep track of which miles were earned for personal travel, which miles were earned for business travel, and which miles are earned from using a credit card, or using a particular long-distance carrier. Taxation of frequent flier miles would only result in mindless complication and paperwork of nightmarish proportions for millions of Americans, the airlines, and the Internal Revenue Service. And the Service should realize this.

At a time when over 15 million Americans are enrolled in frequent flier programs and suspicion that the Internal Revenue Code is not fair and needless complexity is at an all time high, it would be sheer folly for the Serv-

ice to move in this area. They have opened, closed, and reopened several projects to address the tax treatment of frequent flier miles over the years, all to no avail.

I believe that frequent flier miles are not taxable under current law and should remain that way. My bill would simply explicitly say that frequent flier miles are not taxable. I urge my colleagues' support.

ROTARY CLUB OF SAN CLEMENTE

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention an organization that has provided 50 years of outstanding service to the city of San Clemente, CA.

Founded in March, 1946, the Rotary Club of San Clemente and its members have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars, equipment, and tens of thousands of manhours in service to the city, the Nation, and the world.

Their accomplishments are numerous. In its many years of service, the Rotary Club of San Clemente has sent thousands of dollars and equipment to De Tiju, Argentina, San Clemente's "sister city". In conjunction with Rotary International, they have taken on the monumental task of eradicating polio in the world by the year 2000. Closer to home, they provide financial support to over 19 San Clemente charities and organizations, as well as, scholarships to local high school seniors.

I would like to commend and thank them for work they so selflessly perform. Their dedication is an inspiration to all.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1561, FOREIGN RELATIONS AUTHOR- IZATION ACT, FISCAL YEARS 1996 AND 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS J. BLILEY, JR.

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 12, 1996

Mr. BLILEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report for H.R. 1561, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, fiscal years 1996 and 1997. This measure dismantles the United States Information Agency [USIA] and, in doing so, amends the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act and the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act. Additionally, the conference report establishes as an urgent priority the development of an appropriate national strategy to respond to emerging infectious diseases. I am interested in these provisions as a general matter, and also as chairman of the Committee on Commerce.

Regarding the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act, the Committee on Commerce exchanged letters with the Committee on Foreign Affairs when that committee sought to amend the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for fiscal years 1990 and 1991 (Pub. L. 101-246). Furthermore, the Commerce Committee reported its own version of the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act (Pub. L. 98-111) on July

29, 1983 (H. Rept. 98-284, Part II). The committee will be interested to see the results of the pilot program to permit advertising on such television and radio broadcasts as provided for in the conference report. I look forward to continued activity on the part of the Commerce Committee in these areas, although I still believe the Television Marti and Radio Marti programs should not be administered through the Voice of America.

Turning to another point of interest in the conference report, this measure requires that the President develop a strategic plan "to identify and respond to the threat of emerging infectious diseases to the health of the people of the United States." In accordance with this committee's jurisdiction over public health and quarantine under rule X of the Rules of the House, I look forward to the opportunity to review the President's recommendations in concert with other efforts made by the Commerce Committee on that front.

Based on the jurisdiction of the Committee on Commerce over the aforementioned statutes, and on the jurisdiction of the committee over public health, I would like to note our intent to continue in the exercise of our authority in these areas.

ESSAY ON FREEDOM BY MICHELLE FUNK OF RICHMOND

HON. DAVID M. MCINTOSH

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 19, 1996

Mr. MCINTOSH. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to give my report from Indiana for the week of March 11.

This week I would like to share with you an essay written by a sixth grade girl named Michelle Funk. Michelle is from Richmond, IN, in my district. Her essay won the top school award for sixth grade and first place in a Sertoma Club contest.

Michelle has entitled her essay, "Freedom." I think Michelle describes the God given right of self-determination better than many adults.

Her essay begins.

Imagine this: Johnny and Mark were playing one-on-one basketball when a bully came up to them and said, "Give me that ball!" Johnny said, "I don't have to. It's a free country."

"It's a free country." Many times that just seems like an excuse for not doing things we're told to. But it's true. It is a free country. But what does that mean?

One thing is rights, the rights that are listed in the Constitution. They say that we can go to school, speak our minds, publish our ideas, and believe in whatever and whoever we want to.

A right that is very important is voting. Even though it doesn't apply to me yet, it's still important that we can choose our own leaders instead of having a ruler who's succeeded by his children and their children.

Even though we have a right to freedom, it's still a privilege, and privileges always go with responsibilities. If we are responsible now and in the future, we will make a better life for ourselves and our future families in many ways. If you're responsible, you will do better in school and in your future career. So be responsible!

But then again, you don't have to. It's a free country!