

As long as there are Americans, there will be the calls for clean air and water, conservation of resources and an effective educational system. But answering these calls with laws and money will fail unless we exhibit respect for people and property, love of God and country and compassion for the sick and poor. Then and only then can we answer the most important call—the right to be called an American.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER JOANNE M.
CHIAVERINI AND FATHER PHILIP
A. SCHMITTER

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to share with my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives the contributions to our community by two committed spiritual leaders. Sister Joanne M. Chiaverini, of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and Father Philip A. Schmitter are the two codirectors of the St. Francis Prayer Center. Sister Joanne and Father Phil have ministered to the spiritual, economic, and health needs of the people of northern Flint for many years.

Sister Joanne Chiaverini, a sister for 39 years, founded the St. Francis Prayer Center in July 1974 to be a spiritual oasis for persons of all denominational, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. She insisted the center be located where "the poor could walk" and has fostered a place that has provided programs, retreats, and classes for nurturing a healthy self image. She has lead the center to be a spiritual organization that ministers with and to the poor in roles of referral, initiation, and advocacy.

Father Philip Schmitter's commitment to the poor led him to move into HUD's River Park Apartments—a public housing complex—in 1978. He also became a full-time codirector of the St. Francis Prayer Center in 1978.

Sister Joanne, Father Phil, and the St. Francis Prayer Center have worked with neighborhood residents, civil rights groups, and environmentalists to raise awareness of the need for environmental equity. They have challenged the Federal Environmental Protection Agency and Michigan's Department of Natural Resources to do more to defend environmental quality in predominantly minority neighborhoods.

As a result of their hard work, the EPA has selected Flint as one of nine sites across the country where violations of environmental equity are being investigated. Flint was selected as the first site of the nine due to the well organized grass roots appeal initiated by Father Phil and Sister Joanne.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Flint is a better place to live in because of the good work of Sister Joanne, Father Phil and the St. Francis Prayer Center. They continue to stand as a symbol to all of the spirituality of St. Francis who saw all of us as part of the good gift of God's creation, to be kept clean, unpolluted, and preserved from exploitation.

CONGRATULATIONS WINNERS OF
1996 SPOKANE SCHOLARS FOUNDATION

HON. GEORGE R. NETHERCUTT, JR.

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. NETHERCUTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the winners of the 1996 Spokane Scholars Foundation Awards. This award is solely based on the exceptional performance that these students have demonstrated in their course work and test scores in a specific academic subject. These students truly represent the finest young men and women in our community.

I am proud to announce this year's winners are: Mr. David Gosse from Cheney High School for his outstanding achievements in the area of science; Miss Sarah M. Westergren from Mead Senior High School for her outstanding achievements in the area of English; Mr. Robert M. Dirks from Lewis and Clark High School for his outstanding achievements in the area of mathematics; Miss Joy K. Crosby from North Central High School for her outstanding achievements in the area of foreign languages; Mr. Nicholas A. McCarthy from St. George's School for his outstanding achievements in the area of social sciences; and Miss Shayna Silverstein from Lewis and Clark High School for her outstanding achievements in the area of fine arts.

I congratulate all of these extraordinary students for their hard work in achieving this exceptional recognition and wish them the very best in all of their future endeavors.

HONORING THE WILLIAMSON
COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. BART GORDON

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. GORDON. Mr. Speaker, I am taking this opportunity to applaud the invaluable services provided by the Williamson County Volunteer Fire Department. These brave, civic-minded people give freely of their time so that we may all feel safer at night.

Few realize the depth of training and hard work that goes into being a volunteer firefighter. To quote one of my local volunteers, "These firemen must have an overwhelming desire to do for others while expecting nothing in return."

Preparation includes twice-monthly training programs in which they have live drills, study the latest videos featuring the latest in firefighting tactics, as well as attend seminars where they can obtain the knowledge they need to save lives. Within a year of becoming a volunteer firefighter, most attend the Tennessee Fire Training School in Murfreesboro where they undergo further, intensified training.

When the residents of my district go to bed at night, they know that should disaster strike and their home catch fire, well-trained and qualified volunteer fire departments are ready and willing to give so graciously and generously of themselves. This peace of mind should not be taken for granted.

By selflessly giving of themselves, they ensure a safer future for us all. We owe these volunteer fire departments a debt of gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

NATIONAL PUERTO RICAN
AFFIRMATION DAY

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, National Puerto Rican Affirmation Day was held on March 29, 1996, and I would like to share with my colleagues the remarks I made as the host of a public policy forum on health issues affecting the Puerto Rican community.

Welcome to this public policy forum. Today we are going to discuss the health issues that are affecting the Puerto Rican community. We will try to find solutions to the problems and to develop public policy guidelines that would help improve the health and access to medical services for our community.

Participants in this forum are: Dr. Nilsa Gutierrez, former director of the AIDS Institute of the New York Department of Health; Dr. Eric Munoz, medical director at the University Hospital in New Jersey; Mr. Aldoph Falcon, vice president for policy and research of the National Coalition of Hispanic Health and Human Services Organizations; Ms. Suleika Cabrera-Drianane, founder and executive director of the Institute for Puerto Rican and Hispanic Elderly; Mr. Enrique Baquero, president of Cyber Tech and a member of the board of directors of the Puerto Rico Hospital Association; and Ms. Miguelina Maldonado, director of Government relations and policy at the National Minority AIDS Council in Washington, DC.

After we finish the presentations on the various health issues we will open the debate to answer questions from the audience.

Puerto Ricans in the United States and those living on the island often suffer from diseases which are related to their environmental and socioeconomic conditions. Puerto Ricans have a high incidence of chronic illnesses, infant mortality, alcohol and drug abuse, and more recently, HIV/AIDS infection.

Poor living conditions, hazardous working environments, lack of access to medical services, and the rising costs of health care are some of the health challenges that the Puerto Rican community faces.

Many in our community work in industries which have a high number of uninsured employees. A large portion of the population resides in inner-city areas which lack adequate medical services for our community. In addition, low median family income, the lowest of any other group in the nation, and a high cost of living in inner-city areas have prevented Puerto Ricans from purchasing private health insurance. In 1992, 50 percent of the population had no private health insurance and 21 percent had no health coverage whatever. These are alarming rates for any community.

Puerto Ricans are growing every day more dependent on Government programs for health care insurance. In 1992, 32.2 percent of the Puerto Rican population received Medicaid benefits, a higher percentage than that of African-Americans, and five times higher than

that of non-Hispanic Whites. In addition, 60 percent of the population in Puerto Rico depend on Government health care programs.

The proposed cuts in funding for Medicaid and Medicare therefore pose a disproportionate threat to the health of the Puerto Rican population. Although President Clinton, in budget negotiations, has forced them to moderate their demands, the Republican leadership in Congress still proposes to slash the funding for Medicaid by \$132 billion and Medicare by \$270 billion. These cuts will force the elimination of health care services, such as dental care, physical therapy, and nursing facilities for children.

In addition, because Puerto Rico is a commonwealth of the United States, it does not receive funding at full parity in Government programs. Funding for Medicaid is at one-tenth the amount that Puerto Rico would receive if it was treated equally. This is not a statement in opposition to the commonwealth status, nor an expression in support of statehood or the independence of Puerto Rico. But it is a fact of disparity. Although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, they receive a much lower share of Federal funding for Government programs than that which is allocated to programs for U.S. citizens who live in the United States. Reductions in funding would further jeopardize access to health care for Puerto Ricans.

The high incidence of HIV/AIDS infection among heterosexual drug users is a growing epidemic that requires special assistance in our community. In addition to the growing need to increase the access to medical services is the urgent need to provide culturally sensitive services to our community. Many providers do not have bilingual personnel or programs that identify with the culture of our community.

In short, low utilization rates of medical services, lack of prenatal and post partum care, low birth weights for infants, high infant mortality, and inadequate child immunization, are all indicators of a community that it is highly underserved.

We need to pursue a pro-active health care agenda which would provide coverage for the vulnerable population, the elderly, the poor, pregnant women, children, the medically disabled, and the working uninsured. We also need more effective outreach efforts to inform our community of the availability of health care services.

Community-based organizations which already provide culturally sensitive medical services could be one of the catalysts for increasing the access to adequate health care in our community. In addition, we need to increase the participation of the Puerto Rican community in the medical field by providing Federal scholarships and other programs that would enable our students to pursue careers in health professions. We should also provide incentives to educational institutions to develop scholarships for our medical students.

Slashing the funding for Government programs that are often the only source of health coverage for the poor will pose higher health risks to a population, such as ours, which is already disproportionately lacking access to medical services.

I would like now to ask the members of the panel to talk more in detail about the health issues which are afflicting our community.

TRIBUTE TO THEODORE ZUBAR

HON. ROBERT A. BORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. BORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the outstanding contributions of Theodore Zubar to the Boy Scouts Organization and his community during his 60 years of service.

As a strong advocate for the Boy Scouts and the Philadelphia community, Theodore Zubar has greatly influenced the lives of many people who have been fortunate enough to know and work with him during his remarkable career.

In 1929, at the young age of 12, Ted began his long and prosperous career with the Boy Scouts. Six years later, Ted became the assistant Scoutmaster and by the time he was 24 years old he was appointed Scoutmaster. With his hard work and loyalty, Ted continued to move up the ladder with the Boy Scouts. In 1947, he was elected Neighborhood Commissioner and held that position for 12 years.

By 1955, Ted organized the Troop Committee which operated various committees in North Central and Woodland Districts of Pennsylvania. As the Boy Scouts continued to strengthen and grow, Ted became the assistant district commissioner of the Scout Roundtable until 1963 and then presided over the Troop Committee for the next 20 years. Continuing his commitment to the Boys Scouts Organization, Ted took on the responsibility of Scouting Coordinator until becoming a member of the Frontier District Advancement Committee and the Frontier District Dean of Merit Badges where he still is a member today.

Ted's work for the Boy Scouts not only extends here in the United States but throughout various parts of the world as well. He has spent much of his life as an ambassador of Scouting for the Boy Scouts and has visited Scout organizations in Zimbabwe, Australia, and Europe. For over 60 years this man has epitomized the Scouting spirit in Philadelphia and throughout the world.

Although Ted's vision and loyalty with the Boy Scout Organization summarizes his excellent accomplishments, he also extended a helping hand to those unfortunate children in the Philadelphia community as well. Being active in his community for over 50 years, Ted became a Lu Lu Temple Shriner and a member of the Quaker City Shrine Club—Hospital Committee for the Crippled Children in 1977. As a member of the Greater Philadelphia Stamp Club, he distributed stamps to the Benjamin Franklin Stamp clubs in Philadelphia's Public Schools. These are only a few examples where Ted has brought joy to hundreds of unfortunate children and people within his Philadelphia community.

For these accomplishments, and most importantly, for the positive effects that these accomplishments have had on the people associated with the Boy Scout Organization and his community, I would like to recognize and thank Theodore Zubar.

CORA SWEATT, 1996 TENNESSEE MOTHER OF THE YEAR

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 24, 1996

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mrs. Cora Sweatt for being named as the 1996 Tennessee Mother of the Year. This indeed is a great honor and one which Mrs. Sweatt should be very proud to receive.

I believe that if we are going to remain a strong country in years to come, we must strengthen the American family.

Mothers are special individuals who sacrifice a great deal for their families and especially their children, and often times they are not recognized for their hard work and devotion. I am proud to see that my home State of Tennessee has taken the time to honor a woman like Mrs. Sweatt. She has had great success at balancing many critical responsibilities for the family and even has taken time from a very busy schedule to serve the community as well.

I believe that true success is achieved by those who strive for excellency. I want to extend my congratulations to Cora Sweatt for receiving this honor.

I request that a copy of the article that appeared in the Daily Post-Athenian on Friday, March 22, 1996 honoring Mrs. Sweatt as 1996 Tennessee Mother of the Year be placed in the RECORD at this point so that I can call it to the attention of my colleagues and other readers of the RECORD.

CORA SWEATT NAMED TENNESSEE MOTHER OF THE YEAR

(By Anissa Hicks)

A local woman has achieved one of the highest honors in Tennessee.

Cora Beasley Sweatt of Athens has been named the Tennessee Mother of the Year by the Tennessee Mothers Association of American Mothers, Inc.

The selection was made from portfolios received by the Tennessee Mothers Association from organizations, churches and civic groups across the state in response to a statewide appeal for groups to nominate worthy mothers.

Sweatt was named Athens' Mother of the Year during a Chamber of Commerce Banquet in January. The award was sponsored by the Athens Area Chamber of Commerce and the chamber sent information they compiled on Sweatt to the state.

The people nominated for state Mother of the Year had to exemplify the qualities of the ideal mother, based on activities, character, and achievements and success in rearing her children, as evidence of a happy home with a loving husband by her side, reaffirming the importance of spirituality as a key to strengthening family life.

From these portfolios of the life of the mother, a jury composed of leaders in religion, education, business, government and child rearing select the 1995 Tennessee Mother of the Year, who then represents Tennessee in Nebraska at the American Mothers Annual Conference in April.

"It's hard to believe I was chosen for this," Sweatt said. "To say the least, I'm deeply honored and very happy."

"I'll do my best to represent the state of Tennessee as Mother of the Year," she said. "I hope and pray I'll represent the state in a positive manner and carry out the purpose of American Mothers, Inc."