

God bless you.

A TRIBUTE TO SHIMON EREM

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to rise today to recognize Shimon Erem as the recipient of the Lawrence J. Weinberg Distinguished Service Award. This award recognizes Shimon for his outstanding grassroots political service which has helped to strengthen relations between the United States and Israel.

Shimon Erem has been a tireless leader of our community and our Nation recognizing the necessity of open dialog, particularly over difficult issues which jeopardize freedom and peace. He has personally arranged meetings among the leaders of France, Norway, Poland, Israel, and the United States, as well as conferences between Christian and Jewish pastors to better Judo-Christian relations.

In addition to his national leadership Shimon has served our local community by participating in California statewide politics, while personally forging relationships between State officials and party activists. Shimon is a true champion of democracy locally in California and throughout the world.

Shimon understands the basis of democracy and the need for strong leadership. He has headed several organizations including B'nai B'rith, the World Alliance of Christians and Jews, Center for Strategic Studies in Los Angeles, and countless others. The Los Angeles community and I thank Shimon for his exceptional service and dedication to the preservation of democracy throughout the world.

Alexis de Tocqueville once said that:

A people among whom individuals lost the power of achieving great things single-handed would soon relapse into barbarism.

Tocqueville meant that democracy would not survive without people like Shimon sacrificing time and energy for the benefit of this Nation. I honor Shimon Erem for his work toward peace and congratulate him as the recipient of the Lawrence J. Weinberg Distinguished Service Award.

THE INTRODUCTION OF THE CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE OF REGULATORY ANALYSIS CREATION ACT

HON. SUE W. KELLY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation that will greatly assist this body in obtaining information that it can use to fulfill its responsibilities under the Congressional Review Act. My legislation would create a Congressional Office of Regulatory Analysis, or CORA, whose sole purpose would be to provide Congress substantive information on the potential impact of new regulations on our Nation's small business.

In March 1996, the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act [SBREFA]

was enacted. Contained within this legislation is an often overlooked, but nevertheless significant, provision that gives Congress the authority to prevent new Federal regulations from taking effect. This new regulatory disapproval authority is designed to allow Congress to become a more active participant in the regulatory process.

Members of Congress have often protested that Federal agencies routinely promulgate regulations that exceed their legal authority. Given these complaints, and the fact that the regulatory burden has become unbearably large, one would expect that Congress would be vigorously employing its powers under the Congressional Review Act. However, in practice, the exact opposite is true. As of May 21, 1997, roughly 14 months after the Congressional Review Act became effective, 4,574 nonmajor final rules have been submitted to GAO and Congress, and 72 major rules, on which GAO is required to submit a statement to Congress, have been issued. Yet, not a single resolution of disapproval has been passed. The House of Representatives has failed even to consider one such resolution.

In my opinion, this is not how the Congressional Review Act was designed to operate. Congress must use its authority to exercise stronger oversight of the regulatory state. Before I describe the responsibilities of CORA, however, I would like to make one point very clear: this initiative is not based on the assumption that all regulations are bad. Some regulations have been instrumental in protecting our environment and ensuring the safety of millions of American workers. These efforts should not be weakened, and it is not the intent of this legislation to do so.

Having said that, let me explain more fully what CORA is designed to do. Under my bill, a new legislative support office, called the Congressional Office of Regulatory Analysis, would be created. Why is such an office needed? As discussed above, the Congressional Review Act is simply not being implemented. The executive branch continues to churn out new regulations at a staggering pace. In most cases, the only information that Members of Congress have available to them regarding a regulation is that which is provided by the promulgating agency. As we all know, Federal agencies are required to complete a number of reports and analyses on rules that they are promulgating. A problem exists, however, because agencies often ignore these requirements, or fail to thoroughly comply with them. Aside from what an agency may provide, there is no other source of information that Congress can rely upon. CORA's sole purpose would be to analyze new agency regulations to help Congress determine whether the use of its disapproval authority under the Congressional Review Act would be warranted.

How would the Office operate? Under current law, virtually all new regulations are required to be filed with Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office and each House of Congress. The Comptroller General has unique responsibilities if these regulations are determined to be major. A major rule, whose determination is made by the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, is defined as a rule that will likely have an annual effect on the economy of \$100 million or more. In these instances, GAO is required to submit a report to the committees of jurisdiction by the end of 15 calendar

days containing an assessment of the agency's compliance with the procedural steps required by various statutes and executive orders relating to the regulatory process. The usefulness of these reports, however, is minimal because they simply assess procedural steps taken by an agency, and do not at all address the substance of the regulation. As a result, they do little to assist Members of Congress determine the merits of the rule itself.

This would change under my legislation. Initially, the functions now designated to the General Accounting Office would be transferred to CORA. In addition to the report on an agency's compliance with procedural steps, CORA would also perform its own regulatory impact analysis of major rules. Such an analysis would provide a second opinion on the agency's actions and provide Members with a substantive assessment of the impact the regulation is likely to have. This information could then be used to facilitate use of the Congressional Review Act.

In addition, CORA could also conduct regulatory impact analyses of nonmajor rules. Currently, there is no type of review of these regulations by GAO or anyone else. CORA would undertake these analyses at the request of a committee or individual Member, based on a priority system established within the legislation and the discretion of the Director of the Office. Under such a system, CORA could analyze important nonmajor rules using limited budgetary resources.

Under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, the Congressional Budget Office also has certain regulatory analysis functions. CBO is required to estimate the costs of regulations that may be needed to implement a particular piece of legislation. Upon request, CBO is also required to compare its estimate with that of the agency promulgating the rule. Because CORA would be the repository of regulatory information for Congress, it would be appropriate for CORA to assume this function.

Mr. Speaker, Congress needs accurate, reliable, nonpartisan information that it can use to assess new regulations. A source for such information does not currently exist. My legislation would create a small, inexpensive, and focused office within the legislative branch that could provide such information. It would consolidate and centralize such a function, and greatly facilitate effective implementation of the Congressional Review Act. With the annual cost to our economy of Federal regulations estimated at roughly \$700 billion and growing, how can we afford not to have such an office?

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

HONORING LINDA VISTA SCHOOL

HON. JAY KIM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. KIM. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to rise today and salute Principal Schara and the teachers and students of Linda Vista Elementary School in Yorba Linda, CA for having been awarded the Blue Ribbon School Award by the U.S. Secretary of Education. I am proud to represent such a fine institution in Congress.

Blue Ribbon awards honor 263 secondary, middle and junior high schools around the

country for showing exceptional dedication to providing a top notch education to its students and preparing them for the next century. Linda Vista was the only school in the 41st District to receive this highly sought-after award. Blue Ribbon schools must show strong leadership, a clear vision, and sense of mission that is shared by all connected with the school, high quality teaching, a challenging up-to-date curriculum, policies, and practices that ensure a safe environment conducive to learning, a solid commitment to parental involvement and evidence that the school helps all students achieve high standards.

Linda Vista School was selected through a highly competitive process in which state education departments, the Department of Defense dependent schools, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Council for American Private Education nominate schools which best meet the superior standards of the award. The selected schools are then visited and reviewed by a panel of 100 outstanding members of the education community. This panel then makes final recommendations to the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Linda Vista will be honored next fall at a national ceremony in Washington DC where the school will be given a plaque and a special flag to fly.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending Linda Vista School for its dedication to preparing its students for the challenges they will face growing up in and around Orange County. Behind this Blue Ribbon school is a dedicated group of faculty, students, and staff whose commitment to education is an example for schools around the country to follow.

TAIWAN'S PRESIDENT LEE DESERVES PRAISE FOR SUCCESS DURING HIS FIRST YEAR

HON. WILLIAM J. JEFFERSON

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note that Monday, May 20, 1997, marked the first anniversary of the administration of President Lee Teng-hui and Vice President Lien Chen of Taiwan.

A few weeks ago, several Members of Congress and I stopped briefly, too briefly, in Taipei on our return to the United States from a congressional trade development trip to Asia and the Pacific rim.

During our stopover, we had the opportunity to visit with President Lee and Vice President Lien. President Lee impressed me, and I believe other members of the delegation, with his commitment to instituting full democracy in Taiwan. I was equally impressed by President Lee's commitment to provide a higher standard of living in Taiwan and to improve relations with both the United States and China.

The first-year record of President Lee and Vice President Chen offers promise for future progress. Taiwan has maintained a steady economic growth with a per capita income of \$13,000—U.S.—that is equivalent of many Western European countries. Taiwan has expanded relations with several countries and has sought a continuing dialog with the People's Republic of China about eventual unifica-

tion with a more democratic and open government in China.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, President Lee deserves congratulations on the many accomplishments during his first year in office and best wishes for continued success and progress. I hope that I will be able to visit Taiwan again and to stay longer than just a few hours.

ARTHRITIS AWARENESS MONTH

HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I come before this body today in honor of Arthritis Awareness Month. This month is set aside to increase the public's knowledge about arthritis, and the many related diseases which affect the joints, bones, muscles, skin, and other connective tissues.

Arthritis and its related diseases are among the most common causes of chronic pain, disability, and disfigurement in Americans today. These diseases occur at all ages, impair the quality of life, and many require medical care and attention over long periods of time.

Health experts estimate that by the year 2020, when the Baby Boom generation approaches the prime years for the onset of chronic illnesses, 60 million Americans will have arthritis, a 50 percent increase over today's estimate.

Currently, the combined cost to society of medical care and lost wages for arthritis and related diseases is estimated to be at least \$143 billion a year.

Arthritis is the No. 1 cause of disability in America. It can limit everyday activities, such as dressing, climbing stairs, and getting in and out of bed, for approximately 7 million Americans. This figure is expected to increase to 12 million by the year 2020.

Though these figures are astounding, they do not truly make an impact until arthritis touches your family. That is what has happened to me. In early 1990, my wife of 31 years, Joe Anne, was experiencing pain in her hands.

After repeated visits to our family doctor, we discovered she has arthritis in her hands. My wife is a very active, determined, and energetic woman. For example, when she was pregnant with our daughter Ashley, Joe Anne delivered calves on her father's farm. For years she was a high school teacher in our hometown. Now she devotes her time and energy to the horses she has bred and trained for years.

Though she has not allowed her arthritis to stop her activities, she is in constant pain and has difficulty doing some things that many of us take for granted.

Joe Anne and I are fortunate enough to reside in the great State of North Carolina. Our State's many opportunities have attracted some of the best and brightest minds in the medical field. In fact, there is a research center in my home State that is one of the leaders in the fight against arthritis.

The Thurston Arthritis Research Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has joined the National Institute of Arthritis, the Centers for Disease Control, and the Ar-

thritis Foundation to bring together a superior medical research team. They have dedicated their facilities to achieve their mission: to eradicate arthritis and ease the suffering of arthritis victims.

The work these facilities have already done speaks to their skill and determination. Their recent breakthroughs are bringing us closer to preventing—and curing—some of the most crippling and costly diseases that affect our Nation.

For example, researchers believe that treatments involving adequate calcium and nutrients, coupled with an exercise program, may provide the most practical approach to the prevention of osteoporosis.

There is also an exciting new avenue of research which indicates that lupus may involve abnormalities in the body's ability to eliminate unnecessary, damaged, or potentially harmful cells. This process is known as programmed cell death. A better understanding of programmed cell death may lead to new treatments for arthritis.

In addition, the studies currently being conducted which examine the causes of cartilage breakdown, and ways to stimulate growth of cartilage, will lead to new treatments in osteoarthritis.

I support the ongoing search for a cure to arthritis. As we work on the fiscal year 1998 budget, I urge my colleagues in the House to consider the thousands of people, present and future, who suffer from arthritis and related disorders.

The Thurston Arthritis Research Center and organizations like it are very close to a breakthrough in their research. Please join me in lending these researchers all the support you can. Your health, or the health of someone you love, could depend on it.

TRIBUTE TO BRUCE A. SEYMORE

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 22, 1997

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to congratulate Mr. Bruce Seymore as he retires after thirty-one years of service with the city of Port Huron as the director of finance. His colleagues will be honoring him with a dinner on June 27, 1997.

Mr. Seymore began his career with the city of Port Huron in 1966 as director of finance. Under his leadership and guidance, for twenty-one years, the department received the Certificate for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The department has received this distinction longer than any other unit of government in Michigan.

Along side his success with the city of Port Huron, Mr. Seymore has been an incredible asset to his community. Throughout the years, Mr. Seymore has served on the Michigan Waterways Council of Girl Scouts Board and as president of Goodwill Industries. His compassion and devotion to those in need prompted the board of directors at Goodwill to give Mr. Seymore the Scotty Hanton Award in 1979. The Scotty Hanton Award is granted yearly to a person who personifies the essence of Goodwill. The nominees are picked based on their time of service, time investment, personal contributions, and spirit.