

THOMAS B. EVANS, JR.

Washington, DC, May 26, 1997.

Hon. CHARLES B. RANGEL,
Rayburn House Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR CHARLIE, A good friend of mine, Omer Eissa, recently died in a tragic automobile accident in Sudan where he was visiting a brother who was very ill.

Omer was always a great friend of the United States and hosted Arthur Mitchell and Dance Theatre of Harlem at the Sudanese Embassy on several occasions. You may recall the time we sat in the Presidential Box with the Reagans to watch Dance Theatre perform at the Kennedy Center.

I believe Omer's wife would very much appreciate it if you included some remarks about him in the Congressional Record (a draft statement is attached).

Let's get together one of these days when Alma and Mary Page are in town. She joins me in sending our warmest regards to you both.

Sincerely,

Tom.

WELCOMING REAR ADM. NORMAN
T. SAUNDERS TO FLORIDA

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to welcome Rear Adm. Norman T. Saunders to south Florida as the new Commander of the Seventh Coast Guard District and Maritime Defense Command Seven.

Admiral Saunders, in his 30 plus years of service, has represented the U.S. Coast Guard with distinction. Before joining the Seventh District, Admiral Saunders served as chief in the Office of Law Enforcement and Defense Operations. In this capacity, Admiral Saunders directed several Coast Guard programs including enforcement of laws and treaties, operational and military readiness, intelligence, and investigative and security activities. The success of these programs is a testament to the leadership of Admiral Saunders.

Admiral Saunders is the recipient of numerous decorations including two awards of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V", two awards of the Coast Guard Commendation Medal, the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V", and the Coast Guard Achievement Medal.

Mr. Speaker, the Seventh District, which encompasses 1.8 million square miles in the Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea, plays a vital role in deterring illegal narcotics from entering our streets and communities. Keeping illegal narcotics out of the hands of our youth is one of the many difficult challenges the Coast Guard and the Seventh District face everyday. In addition, the Seventh keeps illegal immigrants from entering the United States. Since 1992, over 43,000 Cuban and 58,000 Haitian migrants have been interdicted by the Seventh. Whether it's fighting the war on drugs or illegal migrant interdictions, I am certain Admiral Saunders will continue the great work of the Seventh District in keeping our shores and waterways clear of any potential dangers.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Florida congressional delegation, I welcome Admiral Saunders and his wife Chris to south Florida and urge my colleagues to pay tribute to a

man who continues to serve his country with honor.

A TRIBUTE TO WALTER BETAR

HON. BUD SHUSTER

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today to pay tribute to Mr. Walter Betar, a long time servant of the Altoona Area School District within my congressional district. Mr. Betar will be retiring from the Altoona Area High School where he has dutifully served as principal for 25 years of his 41-year career with the district. Please join me in wishing him the best of luck as he begins to pursue new challenges in his retirement.

Mr. Betar graduated from the Altoona Area High School in 1950. Upon graduation he was accepted at the Pennsylvania State University where he went on to earn his B.A. in the General Arts and Sciences. He then attended the Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he earned a Masters of Education in guidance and Counseling. In 1958, during his own academic pursuits, he began his distinguished career in education as a Social Studies instructor at the Altoona Area High School. Mr. Betar would soon move on to administrative positions within his field, first serving as a guidance counselor and then serving as the Director of Federal Programs. During this time he continued to lead by example by continuing his own education, attending Shippensburg State College and the University of Pittsburgh. In 1972 Mr. Betar became Principal of the Altoona Area High School, the very school he had graduated from 22 years earlier.

His 41 years of service with the Altoona Area School District is truly testament to his dedication to the field of education and our community. His lifelong commitment to generations of students is not only commendable but more importantly it has played a valuable part in shaping generations of our youth. Students rely heavily on their educators as role models in their development and we have been very lucky to have such an outstanding example and leader in Mr. Betar.

Mr. Speaker, I will close by once again asking you to help me pay tribute to Mr. Walter Betar on his retirement. His life has been one of service and dedication to others and I am honored to have him as one of my constituents. I would like to thank Walt for his commitment to others and for making our community a better place to live. I wish him the very best in all that he pursues.

SPANISH PEAKS WILDERNESS ACT OF 1997

HON. DAVID E. SKAGGS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to give permanent protection as wilderness to the heart of the Spanish Peaks area in Colorado.

The bill is cosponsored by my colleague from Colorado, Mr. MCINNIS. I greatly appreciate his assistance and support.

The mountains now usually known as the Spanish Peaks are two volcanic peaks in Las Animas and Huerfano Counties whose Native America name is Wayatoya. The eastern peak rises to 12,683 feet above sea level, while the summit of the western peak reaches 13,626 feet. The two served as landmarks not only for native Americans but also for some of Colorado's other early settlers and for travelers along the trail between Bent's Old Fort on the Arkansas River and Taos, NM.

With this history, it's not surprising that the Spanish Peaks portion of the San Isabel National Forest was included in 1977 on the National Registry of Natural Landmarks.

The Spanish Peaks area has outstanding scenic, geologic, and wilderness values, including a spectacular system of over 250 free standing dikes and ramps of volcanic materials radiating from the peaks. The State of Colorado has designated the Spanish Peaks as a natural area, and they are a popular destination for hikers seeking an opportunity to enjoy an unmatched vista of southeastern Colorado's mountains and plains.

The Forest Service reviewed the Spanish Peaks area for possible wilderness designation as part of its second roadless area review and evaluation—known as RARE II—and in 1979 recommended designation as wilderness of 19,570 acres. Concerns about private land inholdings in the area prompted Congress, in the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1980, to instead provide for its continued management as a wilderness study area.

A decade later, the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993 included provisions for long-term management of all the other wilderness study areas in our State's national forests, but meanwhile questions about the land-ownership pattern in the Spanish Peaks area had prompted the Forest Service to change its mind about designating it as wilderness. That, in turn, led to inclusion in the 1993 wilderness bill of a requirement for its continued management of that area as a wilderness study area for 3 years—until August 13, 1996. The 1993 bill also required the Forest Service to report to Congress concerning the extent of non-Federal holdings in the likelihood of acquisition of those holdings by the United States with the owners' consent.

The required report was submitted in 1995. It indicated that within the wilderness study area, there were about 825 acres where the United States owned neither the surface nor the mineral rights, and about 440 acres more where the United States owned the surface but not the minerals. Since then, through voluntary sales, the United States has acquired most of the inholdings. Today only 188 acres of inholdings remain, and 80 of those acres are held by the Wilderness Land Trust, which plans to transfer them to the Forest Service. So the way is now clear for Congress to finish the job of protecting this outstanding area by designating it as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The bill I am introducing today would designate as wilderness about 18,000 acres of the San Isabel National Forest, including both of the Spanish Peaks as well as the slopes below and between them. This includes most of the lands originally recommended for wilderness by the Forest Service, but with boundary revisions that will exclude some private lands.

The lands covered by this bill are not only striking for their beauty and value for primitive

recreation, but also for attributes that create unique conditions for endemic plant communities. They fully merit—and need—the protection that will come from their designation as wilderness.

The bill itself is very simple. It would just add the Spanish Peaks area to the list of areas designated as wilderness by the Colorado Wilderness Act of 1993. As a result, all the provisions of the act—including the provisions related to water—would apply to the Spanish Peaks area just as they do to the other areas on that list. Like all the areas now on that list, the Spanish Peaks area covered by this bill is a headwaters area, which for all practical purposes eliminates the possibility of water conflicts. There are no water diversions within the area.

Mr. Speaker, enactment of this Spanish Peaks bill will not finish the job of protecting the Federal lands in Colorado that need the protection that comes with designation as wilderness. We need to provide that protection for lands in Rocky Mountain National Park, as would be done by my bill—H.R. 302—now pending before the Committee on Resources, and also for other areas of our State, including many managed by the Bureau of Land Management. I will continue to work to achieve the protection of these areas. But in the meantime, we should act without delay to pass this important measure for the Spanish Peaks area.

ONONDAGA COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF SOCIAL SERVICES,
ROBERT STONE, RETIRING
AFTER 24 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, today I ask my colleagues to join me in commending the Onondaga County Commissioner of Social Services, Robert Stone, for 24 years of dedicated public service as he begins his retirement this month.

Bob Stone is truly a leader in our community. His professionalism, integrity, and leadership throughout his tenure are a testament to his character and high standard in public service.

The commissioner worked tirelessly to revitalize our social service system by opening lines of communication within the department, securing grants, and working with State legislators to produce responsible social service law. The result has been a productive, sensitive, and often innovative department.

Central New York owes a debt of gratitude to Commissioner Stone for his exemplary public service record and his caring approach to helping the truly needy. He joins a very distinguished group of former commissioners of social services, such as John Lascaris and William Walsh.

It is with great admiration and respect that I wish Commissioner Robert Stone the best as he retires from public service and thank him. He leaves our community better for his presence.

TRIBUTE TO PAULA PORTER

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine work and outstanding public service of Paula Porter, the outgoing chairman of the board of the Victorville Chamber of Commerce in Victorville, CA. Paula was recently honored for her dedicated advocacy on behalf of the citizens and business community of the Victor Valley.

Paula Porter graduated from Victor Valley High School and is a 1981 graduate of the University of Redlands with a bachelor of science degree in business administration. A native Californian and seventh generation native of San Bernardino County, she works as vice president and treasurer of Porter Real Estate. She is the former city clerk and assistant to the city manager for the city of Victorville. Over the years, she has also served in a variety of civic and community oriented capacities.

Paula's longstanding commitment to and support of the Victorville Chamber is demonstrated through her fine leadership and many years of active participation. She was first elected to the board in 1992 and has served in many capacities—vice president for membership services, vice president for financial services, vice president for community services, vice president for business services, and vice president for economic development.

As chairman of the board, Paula has developed a number of new ventures for the chamber including participation in the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Accreditation Program and developing a partnership with the Victor Valley Daily Press newspaper. Over the years, her work has also resulted in technological advances for the chamber including the addition of new computers and an Internet web site.

Mr. Speaker, Paula Porter provides an example of leadership that is deeply respected and admired by her professional colleagues and the community at large. I ask that you join me, our colleagues, and Paula's many admirers in thanking her for such dedicated service and wishing Paula and her husband, Bill, the very best in the years ahead.

STATEMENTS OF KRISTY LAVERY,
TARO BEDELL, KELLY JENNINGS,
AND TORI TILLATOSN,
ESSEX TECHNICAL CENTER,
REGARDING TEENAGE SMOKING

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of my colleagues I would like to have printed in the RECORD this statement by high school students from Essex Technical Center in Vermont, who were speaking at my recent town meeting on issues facing young people.

Ms. LAVERY. Teenage smoking is a pressing issue in today's society. We feel there is a need with the tobacco industry to try to stop the sale of tobacco to minors. In recent news a big deal was made involving the advertise-

ment of tobacco. For many years the Joe Camel figure in Camel cigarettes has been under the gun. The government believes that advertising is promoting smoking to the young. This is a valid concern considering 3,000 young people a day become a regular smoker according to the 1994 report of the Institute of Medicine from the National Academy of Sciences. The number keeps climbing and in 1995, 4.8 percent of students said they had smoked in the last 30 days. Two years earlier in 1993, 3.5 percent said they had smoked in the last 30 days. Two years earlier in 1993, 3.5 percent said they had smoked within the last month. Most of these students admit to buying them without showing proof of ID.

Should the responsibility of cracking down on selling be the sole job of the police? For now it is. It also has to do with store owners and enforcement of punishment and fines. Steps to put more responsibility on store owners are being taken such as the new photo ID law and carding everyone who looks under 27. As a 17-year-old I can tell you I have bought cigarettes when I was younger and had no problem. I have noticed a change in carding more now than I did when I was 15.

The problem is that cigarettes are too accessible to kids. We took a survey at Essex Technical Center on Do you smoke, why or why not? 64 percent of the people said that they had smoked. 35 percent said that they started because of peer pressure. The majority of the non-smokers said they did not smoke because it was gross and it kills you.

We have a tape of interviews from students. We also have those surveys that we did that we can give you and we did. Perhaps we should also show you why the percentages chose to smoke. I feel I have smoked previous in my young years and I quit it because I do not feel I want to die like that. I think it is a disgusting death.

Ms. BEDELL. Yes, it causes cancer, lung cancer, emphysema, and for young kids it is mostly the fact that the health is—you know, in physical activity, you know, people aren't involved in sports as much and I think it is social. It really has to do with the social part of school.

Ms. LAVERY. A lot of it is peer pressure. They see their friends doing it and everyone picks on you if you do not do it and you get curious and you try doing it and then it is very addictive.

Ms. BEDELL. I do not think it has to do with people picking on other people about it, I think it has to do with like the younger grades in the high school see seniors or juniors in high school smoking and I think that that has a lot to do with it. I know at the Tech Center we go to you are not allowed to—well you cannot smoke on any school property anymore and we have to go off school property to smoke, and I think it is just—it is not a privilege because we do not have a privilege, we have to leave, but I think the younger students see it as a way to get out of school or a way to try to fit in with the older kids. Government control over smoking is going overboard but the money that is spent on smoking is outrageous and kind of ridiculous considering the fact that more and more teenagers are smoking each year. And I agree with the new photo ID law, I am all for that, but I do not think it is being watched enough, I do not think it is being used in many cases in small businesses, and I think it has to start at home, that the government has to take it out of the police's hands and like storeowners' hands and put it into the homes and you know, teach parents how to talk to their kids about smoking because it starts at home.