

and well baby care, routine office visits, immunizations, routine lab tests, preventive dental care, and EPSDT services. A prescription drug benefit for catastrophic costs is also included. There is no cost sharing for preventive services.

III. QUALIFYING DEPENDENT

A qualifying young dependent is defined as an individual who is under 21 years of age, and is claimed as a dependent for tax purposes. It does not include an individual who has applied for and who has been determined eligible for Medicaid.

IV. TAX CREDIT

Each taxpayer who purchases a health insurance policy for their dependent receives a tax credit in an amount up to 95 percent of the cost of the premium to buy health insurance for a qualifying dependent. The credit is available to taxpayers based on a computation of adjusted gross income plus an additional \$5,000 amount for each child covered. There is full tax credit provided at the adjusted gross income of up to \$15,000 plus \$5,000 per child covered by the health insurance policy. The "\$15,000" figure represents approximately 200 percent of poverty for an individual under the age of 65. For example, a family with adjusted gross income of \$25,000 and two qualifying children would receive a refundable tax credit of 95 percent of total premium paid for coverage of the two children. As a family's income rises and the need for a subsidy is less critical, the credit phases out. The credit is available only to subsidize traditional health insurance coverage for children. The bill provides for an advanced payment structure for 60 percent of the tax credit similar to the earned income tax credit advanced payment system. A return relating to premiums received for health insurance coverage for children would be required.

V. EXCISE TAX

The bill provides for an excise tax on any group health plan (25 percent of each premium received by the group health plan for the plan year in which the failure occurs) or insurer that offers individual health insurance policies (25 percent of the total amount of the premiums paid to the insurer for such coverage for the plan year in which the failure occurs) who fails to offer an individual children's health insurance policy for sale. The tax would not apply where the failure to offer a children's health insurance policy was due to reasonable cause and not willful neglect. The tax would also not occur if the failure to offer the plan was corrected within a 30 day period.

VI. OTHER PROVISIONS

Medicaid cost-sharing assistance for qualifying children with family income below 150 percent of the poverty line would be financed 100 percent by the Federal Government. There is coordination with other tax provisions subsidizing health costs to disallow the credit in instances where the taxpayer also claims a medical expense for the same premium cost or claims a deduction for health insurance costs of self-employed individuals. Grants to states for health insurance outreach and information programs would be established.

TRIBUTE TO BISHOP RENE GRACIDA

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a dear friend and a man who com-

mands great respect in the greater south Texas area, Bishop Rene Gracida on the occasion of his silver jubilee of his episcopacy.

Twenty-five years ago, on January 25, 1972, Bishop Gracida was consecrated a bishop by Cardinal John Dearden in St. Mary's Cathedral in Miami, FL. He came to the diocese of Corpus Christi in 1983, and since that time, he has ordained 65 men to the priesthood.

During the celebration of his 25th anniversary, Bishop Gracida will ordain three more men to the priesthood for the diocese of Corpus Christi and three to the diaconate for the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity.

Bishop Gracida has been a powerful presence in Corpus Christi and the south Texas area. He is respected by many people in the community, including this Member.

I wish him the very best on his anniversary and look forward to his service in the community for many years to come.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND RELATED AGENCIES HEARING SCHEDULE

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation and Related Agencies, I am pleased to announce the subcommittee's hearing schedule for fiscal year 1998. A tentative schedule follows.

The subcommittee will conduct 10 hearings beginning in late February and concluding March 20, prior to the March district work period. The subcommittee will receive testimony from Members of Congress and other public witnesses on February 25 and 26. Those parties interested in testifying before the subcommittee are directed to submit a letter of request to the subcommittee no later than February 14. Every attempt will be made to accommodate all requests. Members of Congress and other public witnesses may, without prejudice, submit their testimony for the hearing record rather than testify in person. Oral and written testimony will receive the same consideration.

Oral testimony will be limited to 5 minutes. The subcommittee will receive testimony from only one designated spokesperson per organization, association, municipality, aviation or transit authority, or group. Witnesses testifying before the subcommittee are to provide 25 copies of their prepared testimony to the subcommittee no later than February 20, 1997.

This year, an additional requirement is imposed on nongovernmental witnesses presenting oral testimony. Pursuant to clause 2(g)(4) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Appropriations requires, to the greatest extent practicable, each nongovernmental witness who plans to give oral testimony to submit a written statement including a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source by agency and program, of any Federal grant or subgrant thereof, or contract or subcontract thereof, received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by an entity represented by the witness.

Members and public witnesses who wish to submit their testimony for the hearing record are to provide three copies of their prepared testimony to the subcommittee by April 4, 1997. All Members' requests shall also be submitted by that time.

Any questions can be directed to Linda Muir of the subcommittee staff at 202-225-2141. Correspondence should be addressed to: Subcommittee on Transportation and Related Agencies Appropriations, Attention: Linda Muir, 2358 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

TRANSPORTATION APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE FISCAL YEAR 1998 HEARING SCHEDULE—FEBRUARY 23–APRIL 5, 1997

February 25—Members of Congress and public witnesses.

February 26—Members of Congress and public witnesses (9 am and 1 pm).

March 4—Secretary of Transportation.

March 6—U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO).

March 11—National Transportation Safety Board, Office of Inspector General (1 pm).

March 12—Coast Guard.

March 13—Federal Highway Administration, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

March 18—Federal Aviation Administration.

March 19—Federal Transit Administration, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA).

March 20—Federal Railroad Administration, National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak).

April 4—Prepared statements for hearing record and Members' requests due (3 copies).

CONDIT HONORS LOCAL GROUP

HON. GARY A. CONDIT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. CONDIT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 100 year anniversary sorority from my district known as Omega Nu. In early 1897, five young women attending San Jose High School formed the Greek Organization Alpha Chapter of Omega Nu. They spent a great deal of time hosting luncheons, dances, and tea parties. Members of the Alpha Chapter aided in the establishment of chapters in Stockton, Santa Cruz, Oakland, San Francisco, Sacramento, Alameda, and as far north as Portland, OR, and Seattle, WA, before laws outlawed secret sororities on high school campuses. Not to be deterred the Alpha Chapter sought out young matrons as members and the society evolved from a strictly social group to a more charity minded organization.

At the conclave in 1914, Grand President Georgy Landsborough from Sacramento called upon all chapters to "maintain a special aim for the sorority namely charity * * * and that it is up to us to show our critical friends, through the excellent work that we can do along this line that we can be a blessing to the community in which we exist."

Distance, war and antifraternity laws impacted several out-of-State chapters. Thus, since the early 1920's, northern California has been home to 13 extremely active Omega Nu chapters; each distinct within their community but with charity remaining the first and foremost focus of the various chapters. One hundred years of charity includes food baskets at

Thanksgiving and Christmas time, donating money and services to the Community Chest, now United Way, Red Cross, American Field Service, American Cancer Society, Alzheimer's, Salvation Army, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Special Olympics, AIDS, Abused Women's Centers, Children's Crisis Centers, Meals on Wheels and many other organizations which have needed our help over the years. Omega Nu also provides clothes for destitute families, dental and eye care for young people and contributes money, services, and materials to all levels of the educational system. Many chapters also give scholarships to high school graduates, college students and reentry students to help finance their college education.

Each year, the 13 chapters of Omega Nu compile a journal of all the activities we have taken part in. The number of organizations which have benefited from their years of philanthropic commitment is unbelievable. In the last 50 years, we have given back to the community over \$4,100,000. Besides dollars, the members have also contributed countless hours of their own time and a vast amount of energy, fulfilling the needs of those less fortunate.

It is my pleasure to recognize such a fine organization that has worked so very hard to make a difference in the community in which they serve.

A TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA O'BRIEN,
THE ARGO-SUMMIT CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE VOLUNTEER OF THE
YEAR

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I would like to pay tribute to an outstanding woman who has dedicated much time and effort in bettering the lives of her fellow citizens—Ms. Patricia O'Brien.

Ms. O'Brien's efforts will also be recognized Feb. 21, 1997 by the Argo-Summit Chamber of Commerce as she is the organization's Volunteer of the Year.

A resident of Summit, IL, Ms. O'Brien has been active in collecting food, especially in her place of work, United Parcel Service, where she is a truck driver. Three years ago, she began a food drive at UPS, and in 1996, Ms. O'Brien and her co-workers collected more than 1 ton of food. Last summer, she helped collect and deliver more than 10,000 pounds of extra food from the Taste of Chicago festival, and regularly retrieves leftovers from the McCormick Place Convention Center for area food pantries and homeless shelters.

Ms. O'Brien has received the Casey Award from UPS and the Tom Shay Award from the International Brotherhood of Teamsters for her community service.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the selfless efforts of Patricia O'Brien and extend to her my best wishes for continued success in the future.

THANK YOU TERRY WATSON

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, in 1776, 13 colonies declared their independence to form a new nation. They put their convictions to pen and the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776. Two hundred years later, we continue to celebrate the birth of our Nation. Parades, picnics, marching bands, and barbecues are arranged all over the country. However, the Fourth of July weekend would not be complete without fireworks.

Terry Watson, president of the Bay City Fireworks Festival, founded the festival in 1983 and has contributed to a Fourth of July fireworks display that astounds and astonishes. Terry took a well deserved 2-year break from his hard work and commitment to entertaining Bay City's families. The festival went on without him. However, they experienced financial trouble. The citizens requested that Terry return to revitalize the festival. Terry was elected president in the fall of 1995. Writing new bylaws and forming the board of directors, Terry returned full swing with his commitment to improving and refining the festival operations.

Through several fundraisers, the generous support of Tom LaPorte, president and CEO of Mortgage America, the overwhelming support of the community and the dedication of Terry Watson and the volunteer board of directors, the Bay City Fireworks Festival, retired the nearly \$120,000 debt, and the festival continues to thrive and grow, showcasing Bay City and all of mid-Michigan. Plans are already under way and the work has begun for the 1997 Bay City Fireworks Festival. The citizens of Bay City can look forward to a spectacular display because Terry's motto is "Bigger is Better."

Terry is not only committed to entertaining the people of Bay City but, as a Bay City police officer, he has protected and served the citizens of Bay City for 25 years. He also served as the chairperson of the Fraternal Order of Police Fireworks Programs for 22 years.

I urge my colleagues to join me in sending congratulations and thanks to Terry for his commitment to help fellow Michiganites celebrate our Nation's birthday. He has provided people of all ages enjoyment and awe.

TRIBUTE TO HERB CAEN

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, the relationship between elected officials and the media has historically been one of love and hate. Those of us in the public eye realize that by entering into the arena we are subject to criticism and commentary from the media. After you have spent time in public life you learn to accept the fact that there are going to be those who disagree with you on a variety of issues. Some commentators can give fair, and well-reasoned arguments for why they

have a difference of opinion, and some choose to just throw mud. Herb Caen never threw mud.

On Saturday, February 1, the people of northern California lost one of its most beloved figures. Herb Caen was more than just a columnist, he was a towering figure in the city where he wrote for the San Francisco Chronicle for almost 60 years. Every morning thousands of people in the bay area and beyond awoke to read Herb's unique blend of local news, gossip, jokes, one-liners, and political commentary. In May 1996, Herb was awarded a special Pulitzer Prize for his "extraordinary and continuing contribution as a voice and a conscience of his city." In addition to his column for the Chronicle, he also wrote magazine articles, and 12 books including, "One Man's San Francisco" and "Don't Call it Frisco."

In fact, the people of San Francisco admired him so much that upon his public announcement last summer that he had inoperable lung cancer, the city of San Francisco dedicated a 3.2-mile promenade stretching from China Basin to Fisherman's Wharf as Herb Caen Way. Besides being an entertaining writer, and political watchdog, Herb was a crusader, who used the power of the pen to tackle injustice, and to fight for what he believed in. Many credit Herb with saving the cable cars, and preventing the Golden Gate Park from being paved over by a massive highway project. But more than anything, it was the way in which Herb lived his life that he will be most remembered for. Whether it was dancing the night away to a jazz band, or just strolling along his beloved waterfront, he always had a good time. I am sure that I am joined by all of northern California in saying that we will miss Herb Caen.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CHARLES
P. HOWARD, JR.

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 4, 1997

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay a special tribute to the late Charles P. Howard, Jr., a lawyer and a great civil rights activist in Baltimore, MD.

Charles Preston Howard, Jr. was born in Hampton, VA, the son of Charles Preston Howard, Sr., an attorney, and Louisa Maude Lewis. The family moved to Des Moines, IA, when he was a child, where he graduated from high school in 1939.

While in high school, Mr. Howard and his two brothers, Joe and Lonnie, founded the Iowa Observer, a neighborhood newspaper that grew into a network of four weekly papers that were also published in Indiana and Wisconsin. The three youths were greatly influenced by their great-uncle, Henry McNeal Turner, a turn-of-the-century African Methodist Episcopal bishop whose newspaper, the Voice of the People, crusaded against segregation.

Charles Howard, Jr. began studying journalism at Drake College in 1940 and transferred to Howard University, where he entered an Army training program for journalists. As a reporter for the Army Times during World War II, Mr. Howard displayed his disdain and outrage for segregation which would mark his entire