

New York and beyond. The immediate success of the blood drive attests to the great need it serves: bolstering the available blood bank for all emergency situations of life and death.

Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani selected the Guardians of the Sick for the New York City Community Development Agency's 1996 Most Outstanding community-based organization award. Today I select the Guardians' Blood Drive and its chairman, Rabbi Gershon Tannenbaum, for special recognition in light of their remarkable achievements in serving humanity. Also I would like to commend Mr. Louis Glueck for his aggressive leadership, Rabbi Shmuel Steinharter, executive director for his masterly administration, and Mrs. Esther Schoenblum, its blood drive coordinator for her dynamic zeal in making it all come together.

I hereby proclaim my incessant support and encouragement for the heroic goals of the Guardians of the Sick Blood Drive.

A TRIBUTE TO C. WILLIAM JONES

HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor C. William Jones of Firebaugh, CA, who served a distinguished 20 years with the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority.

Mr. Jones is a well-known farming leader in the San Joaquin Valley, which is the richest agricultural-production region in the country. Twenty years ago, Mr. Jones founded the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Users Association and in 1992, he oversaw the transformation of the association to the San Luis & Delta Mendota Water Authority. The San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority is comprised of 32 water agencies representing approximately 2,100,000 acres of Federal and exchange water service contractors within the western San Joaquin Valley, San Benito, and Santa Clara Counties.

During his tenure as chairman of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority, Mr. Jones ran the operations and maintenance activities of all Federal Central Valley project facilities south of the Delta, including: Tracy pumping plant, Delta-Mendota Canal, O'Neill pumping plant and the San Luis drain. He also provided leadership for the agricultural community's participation in Delta issues resulting in the Bay-Delta accord, Proposition 204, and the CALFED process.

Mr. Jones' involvement in water and agricultural issues has extended far beyond his duties as chairman of the San Luis & Delta-Mendota Water Authority. He has also found time to be active in the California State Water Commission, the Western Cotton Growers Association, the California Chamber of Commerce, and the California Water Control Resource Board.

Mr. Jones is also a devoted family man. He and his wife, Cornelia, have three grown children, including California Secretary of State Bill Jones, who have blessed him with seven grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, please join me in wishing C. William Jones, devoted hus-

band, father, and grandfather and active community member, the best of luck during his retirement.

TRIBUTE TO KELLY S. YARDE

HON. JOHN N. HOSTETTLER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. HOSTETTLER. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to commend Kelly S. Yarde, a charitable and compassionate soldier from the Eighth District of Indiana.

Sergeant Kelly Yarde is a dedicated soldier, a loving father, and a committed husband. And Kelly gives, and he gives abundantly, even in times of personal hardship. In short, Kelly is unusually charitable.

While serving under the command of the U.S. Army in Bosnia, Kelly witnessed firsthand an often overlooked result of war—clothless, toyless, penniless children—while at the same time living in less than luxurious conditions himself. Yet Kelly looked beyond his own needs and did something for the children of the war-torn land where he serves. With the help of his brother Anthony, an Evansville, IN, newspaper reporter, and a hometown radio station, Kelly made a public appeal to his fellow Americans to come to the children's aid.

Citizens from the Eighth District of Indiana and neighboring States answered his call, and they gave abundantly. From new basketballs and hundreds of new crayons and pens to the establishment of new friends via pen pal relationships, Americans gladly spent their time and treasure for kids they may never meet.

I'm sure Kelly would humbly wave off these praises, directing our attention to who he recognizes as the true heroes, the people who generously responded to his pleas. Yet it is fitting to commend Kelly Yarde, a catalyst for giving, an example of charity, and an exemplary U.S. soldier serving his Nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I wish the RECORD to state that during rollcall vote 364, on H.R. 2159, the foreign operations appropriations bill, I was on the floor of the House, I inserted my voting card into the electronic voting machine and voted for passage of the bill. For some reason my vote was not recorded and therefore I am listed as having not voted.

Please let the RECORD reflect that I was present for the vote, as evidenced by my votes on all of the preceding amendments, and I voted in favor of passage of H.R. 2159, the foreign operations appropriations bill.

A TRIBUTE TO JEROME TOWNSHIP FIRE CHIEF ALLEN COLE

HON. DAVE CAMP

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. CAMP. Mr. Speaker, the poet T.S. Eliot wrote that "water and fire shall rot the marred

foundations we forgot, of sanctuary and choir; this is the death of water and fire." For 50 years, the foundations and sanctuaries of Jerome Township were not forgotten, and because of one man's work, far fewer have suffered the death of water and fire.

Today we honor a man who has not only protected our sanctuaries, but our homes and hearths as well; who stood by the foundations of his community and in doing so, fortified its stones. Fire Chief Allen Cole built the Jerome Township Fire Department stone by stone, starting 50 years ago with little more than a converted fire truck Cole kept as his wrecker service he'd opened in 1935. With his wife, Lydia, acting as a dispatcher, citizens reporting a fire could call Cole's garage and know that help was on the way.

In an era when fire was a community's greatest enemy, and was ravaging America's towns and cities, Allen Cole stood watch over Jerome Township, protecting property and citizens from an enemy known for launching deadly, surprise attacks under cover of darkness.

Allen Cole was no stranger to the surprise attacks of fire. Once, while fighting a house fire in Homer Township, he fell through the roof of a burning home, only to slide down the hose—still battling the flames—and emerge through the front door unscathed. Allen Cole today enters retirement, but his commitment and heroism will remain.

He also bestows to the community a fire department that has grown and nourished generations of firefighters to carry on his legacy. For protecting the families of Jerome Township from the destructive power of fire for a half-century, we thank Chief Allen Cole for his service and dedication, and bestow upon him our highest esteem.

SALUTE TO ROCKWALL ACADEMIC BOOSTER CLUB

HON. RALPH M. HALL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. HALL of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation's young people return to school for the beginning of a new year, we are reminded of the importance of education in their lives and our responsibility not only to provide a quality education for them but also to encourage their efforts, build their self-esteem, and motivate them to aspire to a standard of excellence in all that they do.

This is a responsibility shared by all of us—by parents, teachers, school administrators, Government, and the community at large. Today it is my privilege to pay tribute to a community organization in my home town of Rockwall, TX, the Rockwall Academic Booster Club, that was recently formed with these goals in mind.

Beginning this year, the Academic Booster Club will present a letter jacket patch to those students who received straight A's for two consecutive semesters of the previous academic year. The first awards ceremony will take place on Tuesday, September 9, when some 40 students from two middle schools will receive a jacket patch. The letter program is being underwritten by Rockwall Women's League and Rockwall Newcomers Club.

The Academic Booster Club also will present awards to students whose grades improve, honorable mention awards to those who came close, and awards to inspirational teachers. Additional club activities include providing volunteers for school mentoring programs and raising scholarship funds for teacher endowments.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the quality of our students' education is the key to both their future success and to America's future in the global environment. We know that we must do all we can to prepare our young people for the challenges of the 21st century and to promote academic excellence in our schools. I am proud of these efforts in my hometown, and I ask my colleagues today to join me in saluting the Rockwall Academic Booster Club and the outstanding students in Rockwall, TX, whose dedication to academic excellence deserves our recognition.

PRESUMPTIVE DISABILITY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation that incorporates the Supplemental Security Income's presumptive disability system into the Social Security Disability Insurance [SSDI] program.

The Social Security Administration [SSA] is still confronted with a backlog of nearly 1 million cases waiting for disability determination. In fiscal years 1994–96, administration requested additional funds for disability investment funding in order to help SSA handle the exorbitant amount of disability claims. The administration requested \$534 million for disability investment funding as part of the regular administrative budget for fiscal year 1996. These funds were specifically earmarked for processing disability related workloads. Congress appropriated disability investment funding in the amount of \$387.5 million for fiscal year 1996. I supported these past efforts, but we must do more to help these people in their time of urgent need.

Social Security currently has over almost 1 million pending applications for disability benefits. Social Security realizes the challenge it faces in processing an overwhelming number of disability cases. It has made efforts within the past 2 years to reengineer the disability determination process. In 1995, a disability applicant had to wait an average of 5 months to get an initial decision. Today, a disability applicant can expect to wait an average of 3.5 months. I commend the Social Security Administration for their work in reducing the time a needy person must wait for a determination. However, there is still the need to deliver assistance quickly.

In recent years, Congress has heard complaints of deserving applicants waiting months before receiving desperately needed funds, and in some cases, dying before a decision is made. For example, in Arizona a disability applicant was forced to leave her secretarial job due to injuries resulting from a serious auto accident. She applied to the Social Security Administration for disability benefits to offset the loss of her income. She did not realize that she was venturing into an understaffed,

underfunded Federal program that often forces disabled people to wait months to learn whether they qualify for benefits. After a year wait, she was successful in obtaining the benefits to which she was entitled only after hiring an attorney who specialized in such cases. These kinds of long delays are repeated in anecdote after anecdote.

The SSI Program makes an initial determination that presumes a person to be disabled if they fit certain severe disability criteria. These people begin to receive SSI benefits immediately and the SSA then has a 6-month period to make the final determination of eligibility using the SSA's definition of disability.

Being able to receive SSI benefits on the basis of a presumptive disability determination provides the disabled person with much needed money immediately. However, for a worker who has paid into Social Security and becomes disabled, there is no comparable process to identify the people that would most likely qualify for DI benefits. My legislation would remedy this problem by providing for determinations of presumptive disability under Title II of the Social Security Act in the same manner and to the same extent as is currently applicable under title XVI of such act.

This means that if a person is found to be presumptively disabled under title II and meets the requirements for entitlement benefits, the person will begin to receive benefits, after the initial 5 month waiting period required before DI benefits can be paid, for up to 6 months while the final determination is being made. If the person is presumed eligible to receive DI benefits, then their dependents shall also begin to receive benefits.

If however, in the final determination, a claimant's impairment does not meet SSA's definition of disability, they and their dependents shall not be responsible for returning the money they received during the presumptive eligibility determination period.

In some instances, a person may be presumed eligible for SSI benefits before being found to be presumptively disabled under title II. In this case, the person will still be entitled to only 6 months of presumptive disability benefits. In most States, while receiving SSI benefits, a person is eligible for Medicaid. Under this proposal, claimants who would have been eligible for SSI benefits, were it not for their receipt of DI presumptive disability benefits, would be deemed eligible for SSI, making them eligible for Medicaid in those States where SSI eligibility triggers Medicaid eligibility. When the final determination for DI benefits is made, the claimant loses the Medicaid eligibility. Medicare will be provided to disabled workers and their dependents after they have been receiving disability benefits for 24 months, including the time they were receiving presumptive disability payments.

IN MEMORIAM OF MELINE KASPARIAN

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a wonderful woman who dedicated her life to edu-

cating children in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Ms. Meline Kasparian, president of the Massachusetts Teachers Association, former member of the Amherst Town Meeting, past president of the Springfield Education Association, and teacher of literature, writing, and drama in Springfield for 25 years was lost to the people of Massachusetts during the recent August recess. Though she spent 2 years battling cancer, her death was nonetheless sudden and shocking to us all.

Meline strove to ensure educational opportunities for all students, without regard to their socio-economic background. She had a profound belief in the public school system. She knew that for thousands of children it was their best opportunity to succeed in life and she was determined to make sure that they were given the best education possible.

Meline spearheaded reforms in her own school system—initiating the Team Approach to Better Schools in Springfield. She was also a vocal advocate during the legislative battle for the Massachusetts Education Reform Act, which is today helping to improve the standards in every public school across the State.

As the representative for the teachers, Meline also showed an enormous amount of strength. She fought for better working conditions for teachers—knowing that those were the same conditions that our children are learning in. Meline knew that we need to invest more in our public schools in order for our children to succeed.

During my tenure in the House of Representatives I had the opportunity and privilege to work with Meline. Her unwavering devotion to improving public education never ceased to impress me. I will always remember Meline as a tireless advocate for public education. Her energy and drive will be sorely missed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

SUPPORT MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1119

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 5, 1997

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, last night the House debated a motion I offered to instruct House conferees on H.R. 1119, the fiscal year 1998 Defense authorization bill, to retain the amendment I had passed to the bill authorizing the use of United States troops on our border with Mexico. I urge all Members to support this motion and support this important provision. I would like to share with Members some compelling reasons to support the Traficant amendment.

The Traficant amendment authorizes the Secretary of Defense—at the expressed request of the Attorney General and/or the Secretary of the Treasury—to redeploy up to 10,000 U.S. troops to assist the Border Patrol, the INS, or the Customs Service in preventing illegal aliens, drug traffickers, terrorists, and narcotics from entering the United States. The Traficant amendment merely gives the Pentagon the authority to transfer troops—it does not require them to do anything. The transfer of troops could only be made if the Attorney General or Treasury Secretary requests such assistance.