

his achievements in working to improve northern Virginia for all of its residents. We appreciate all of his hard work in making northern Virginia one of the finest places to live and work. For those of us that know of Tom's commitment to northern Virginia, it is no surprise that the Northern Virginia Community Foundation has decided to award him their prestigious founder's award at a gala banquet on October 24, 1997. It is a well deserved award.

TRIBUTE TO "CONCERN FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING"

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding organization that for 25 years has provided housing and career opportunities that have enabled Long Islanders who are recovering from psychiatric disabilities to realize their full potential as productive, happy members of the community.

Founded in 1972, Concern for Independent Living provides an empowering and supportive environment for our Long Island neighbors who are working to achieve a level of independence in the community. As the New York State psychiatric system closes its large hospitals and evolves towards a community-based approach, groups like Concern for Independent Living are critical components in the patient care effort for the 21st century.

Started as a patient advocacy group known as the Concerned Parents and Friends of Central Islip State Hospital, Concern now provides an array of housing opportunities that are based on the consumer empowerment model, whereby residents participate in all levels of management and comprise the majority of the home's board of directors.

To help clients assimilate into the community, Concern offers housing options that range from highly supervised community residences to independent living in apartments and single-family homes throughout Suffolk County. Family, staff, and referral services work together to place clients in the environment that best meets their rehabilitative needs.

Residents of Concern's housing program are also offered vocational opportunities that provides them with real-life training in the business world. Starting with its first job training initiative, a thrift shop program in Central Islip, Concern opened a client-run home, lawn, and garden maintenance business in April 1993. Also placing qualified clients at other, privately operated businesses, Concern offers its residents the invaluable experience of meeting work responsibilities and the satisfaction of knowing that they are a valued, contributing member of the Long Island community.

Mr. Speaker, the programs and opportunities provided by Concern for Independent Living are true models for government-supported, privately operated nonprofit endeavors. They demonstrate that public investment in our communities, when administered in a thoughtful, consumer-focused approach, can make a truly positive impact in the lives of America's citizens. That is why I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in saluting Concern for Independent Living on

its 25th anniversary celebration. We are fortunate to have them in Suffolk County.

GE WATERFORD, NEW YORK FACILITY CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, it's not often that I can give my wholehearted congratulations to a corporation that, after taking a chance on a new technology, has not only prospered but has become a fixture in our local landscape. I couldn't be speaking of any business other than GE Silicones.

Fifty years ago, General Electric scientists made a breakthrough discovery. They found a way to create a group of products that were so versatile and could withstand such high degrees of heat that they were unlike any other seen before. Realizing the immediate potential for these compounds, GE began construction on a new manufacturing facility designed to develop new applications for silicones. The company chose to locate in a small, rural town called Waterford, accessible by both the Hudson River and the D&H Railroad.

Today, that company has grown into a global business that is 3,000 employees strong and has manufacturing and sales facilities throughout the world. A \$1 billion a year enterprise, GE makes more than 2,000 different silicone products which are used in a variety of industries, including electronics, automobiles, personal and health care, and textiles. It's almost unbelievable that one group of products can be used in so many different ways.

And GE Silicones serves as a vital part of the capital region's economy. Employing 1,500 people locally, the company is a significant contributor to the fiscal strength and stability of our area.

But even as the company continues to expand, GE Silicones has not forgotten the community that serves as its base of operations. I couldn't be more pleased to hear of the company's donations to the Village Fire Department and public library in honor of its 50th anniversary celebration. This is just one more example of the company's commitment to be a responsible and caring neighbor.

On this 50th anniversary, and with much appreciation I congratulate GE Silicones and thank General Electric for its continued investment to our community.

HENRY FORD COMMUNITY
COLLEGE 60TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, Henry Ford Community College in Dearborn, MI is celebrating its 60th anniversary. To mark its 60th jubilee, I would like to publicly acknowledge this respected institution's tremendous history of excellence and unparalleled contribution to our community.

Since 1938 Henry Ford Community College [HFCC] has served as a gateway to higher

education for thousands of residents of southeastern Michigan. This institution was established to provide an affordable, high quality college education for students in Dearborn, MI and its surrounding communities.

HFCC has clearly succeeded in meeting these original goals. The college enrolls approximately 20,000 students per year, and has grown to become the fifth largest community college and the tenth largest college in the State of Michigan. I am proud to say that HFCC graduates more than 1,000 students per year. A recent survey showed that 98 percent of HFCC graduates are working in Michigan.

In accordance with the rapidly approaching 21st century, Henry Ford Community College has dedicated itself to keeping pace by continuously renovating and modernizing its facilities and curricula. The completion of the new technology building has provided HFCC with one of the most modern community college manufacturing technology and apprentice training facilities in the Nation. These physical improvements and HFCC's qualified, dedicated faculty provide HFCC students with the training and skills that are needed by today's workers and employers in Michigan and across the Nation.

The success of HFCC's students, faculty, and administration can be directly attributed to their dedication to the legacy of Henry Ford—a legacy of hard work, world-class education, and an eye to the future. Henry Ford Community College has been successful as a leader in education and training, and I believe the school and the individuals who make up its community deserve to be commended.

U.S. POSTAL SERVICE GLOBAL
PACKAGE LINE IMPORTANT TO
AMERICAN MAILERS

HON. TONY P. HALL

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, soon my colleagues and I on the House Rules Committee will consider a rule for H.R. 2378, the Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government Appropriations bill for fiscal 1998. At that time, the committee will determine whether to grant a waiver for a provision in the bill to limit the U.S. Postal Service from expanding its Global Package Line Service.

Global package Link is a new approach using modern technology to ship packages from large mailers to overseas destinations. Today, companies like J.C. Penny, Land's End, L.L. Bean, and Neiman Marcus Direct can use this service to reach easily and economically consumer markets in Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Germany, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Soon service will be extended to France, Mexico and Singapore.

The U.S. Postal Service was created to provide a business approach to the business of moving the mail. Since that time, the Postal Service has lived up to its charge by introducing new products and services to keep pace with the ever changing market. Global Package Link is the latest innovative mailing option aimed at international business customers.

The Postal Service makes available mail service nationally and internationally to every

American consumer and business. Global Package Link is an important part of the service provided to American businesses. Freezing the program will surely hurt American businesses trying to penetrate foreign markets. It will hurt all users of the Postal Service by limiting the ability to upgrade its services.

Under the Rules of the House, the provision freezing the Global Package Link Service may not be considered on the House floor as part of the Treasury-Postal Service Appropriations bill. While it is within the authority of the Rules Committee to grant a waiver to this rule, the merits of this provision are insufficient for such special treatment. Moreover, the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight oppose a waiver for this provision.

Mr. Speaker, the House should not approve legislation to interfere with the Postal Service's efforts to provide innovative, high quality service to American mail users. Certainly, we should not bend our own rules to make in order legislation which would do just that.

ADDRESSING GULF WAR ILLNESS

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman PORTER, Congressman BILL YOUNG, ranking member DAVE OBEY, and their staffs at the Appropriations Committee for all of the help that they have provided me in attempting to address one of the most important issues facing American veterans, and one of the great medical dilemmas facing our entire country. And that is that over 70,000 Persian Gulf veterans, including hundreds in my own State of Vermont, continue to suffer from gulf war illness, and that 6 years after that war's completion, there is still no understanding of the cause of that illness or an effective treatment.

As you know CHRIS SHAYS, the chairman of the Human Resources Subcommittee has held 10 hearings on gulf war illness since March 1996. As a member of that committee, I cannot begin to express to you the frustration that many of us feel regarding the ineptitude of the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration in responding adequately and effectively to the needs of those veterans who continue to hurt.

Pure and simple, the bottom line is that 6 years after the end of the Persian Gulf war, the Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration still have not developed an understanding of the cause of gulf war illnesses or an effective treatment protocol. In fact, their record has been so inadequate that last week the Presidential Advisory Committee on Persian Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses indicated that it will be recommending to the President that an independent agency, outside of the Pentagon, take on responsibility for investigating the health effects of low level chemical and biological weapons exposures. According to Arthur L. Caplan, a bioethics professor at the University of Pennsylvania and a member of the panel, "the Pentagon is not credible to continue inquiries that veterans and the public do not find persuasive." And the New York Times writes, "a special White House panel

said today, that the Pentagon had lost so much credibility in its investigation of the release of Iraqi chemical weapons in the 1991 Persian Gulf War that oversight of the investigation must be taken away from the Defense Department permanently."

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to inform my colleagues that there is language in the Labor-HHS Appropriations Committee report which funds an independent scientific research program into how chemical exposures in the Persian Gulf relate to the illnesses suffered by as many as 70,000 of our veterans. This research program is to be implemented through the Secretary of Health, with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences as the lead agency. The committee has agreed to appropriate \$1.1 million for fiscal year 1998 for this important research, and has committed to fund this research program at a level of \$7 million over a 5-year period. What is important here is that for the first time, a governmental entity outside the Pentagon or the Veterans Administration will be looking at the role that chemicals may have played in gulf war illness—and that is a major breakthrough.

This report language is strongly supported by the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the National Gulf War Resource Center. Veterans and Americans all over this country are less than impressed, to say the least, about the role of the DOD and the VA in this entire process.

Mr. Speaker, the military theater in the Persian Gulf was a chemical cesspool. Our troops were exposed to chemical warfare agents, leaded petroleum, widespread use of pesticides, depleted uranium, and burning oil wells. In addition, they were given a myriad of pharmaceuticals as vaccines. Further, and perhaps most importantly, as a result of waiver from the FDA, hundreds of thousands of troops were given pyridostigmine bromide. Pyridostigmine bromide, which was being used as an antinerve gas agent, had never been used in this capacity before. Under an agreement between the DOD and the FDA in regards to this waiver, the DOD was required to collect data on any use of pyridostigmine bromide. However, the DOD failed to keep this data and in many cases, there are no records to indicate who even took this investigational drug, how much they took, and under what conditions they took it.

For 5 years, the Pentagon denied that our soldiers had been exposed to any chemical warfare agents. Finally, after being forced to admit that there were exposures, they suggested that the exposures were limited. The DOD's first estimates were 400 troops exposed, then 20,000 troops. In July of this year, the DOD and CIA gave us their best estimate—that as many as 98,910 American troops could have been exposed to chemical warfare agents due to destruction of "the Pit" in Khamisyah, an Iraqi munitions facility. Mr. Chairman, I would not be surprised if this estimate is revised upward in the not too distant future, as more information is gathered regarding other incidents of chemical warfare exposure.

Mr. Speaker, an increasing number of scientists now believe that the synergistic effect of chemical exposures, plus the investigational vaccine pyridostigmine bromide, may well be a major cause of the health problems affecting our soldiers.

Dr. Robert W. Haley of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center con-

cludes that the gulf war syndromes are caused by low-level chemical nerve agents combined with other chemicals, including pyridostigmine bromide. Doctors Mohammed Abou-Donia and Tom Kurt, of Duke University Medical Center, in studies using hens, found that a combination of two pesticides used in the gulf war, in combination with pyridostigmine bromide causes neurological deficits in test animals, similar to those reported by some gulf war veterans. Dr. Satu Somani and Doctors Garth and Nancy Nicolson have all completed research which concludes that gulf war veterans' illnesses may be due to combinations of chemical exposures in the Persian Gulf. Dr. Claudia Miller reports that there are similarities between the gulf war veterans' symptoms and those of some civilians exposed to organophosphate pesticides, carbamate pesticides, or low levels of volatile organic chemical mixtures. Dr. William Rea concludes that neurotoxic environmental exposures and other personal exposures prior to and during deployment in the gulf may have resulted in chronically deregulated immune and nonimmune detoxification systems, resulting in multisymptom illness. In addition a number of these scientists and physicians have devised treatment protocols for gulf war illnesses and some are reporting success in their treatments. These are the types of research programs and treatment protocols which our Government should be aggressively pursuing for the sake of our veterans, and what I hope will be accelerated as a result of this language.

The National Institute of Environmental Health is eager and ready to begin research and to provide its results to Congress in an expedient manner. This research program will address three areas of which are necessary to better understand the nature of the program. These are: First, capitalizing on the existing body of knowledge of a similar disorder called multiple chemical sensitivity, second, defining individual genetic differences in the ability to metabolize environmental agents commonly encountered during Desert Storm, and third, developing a better understanding of how multiple exposures interact to exert their toxicity on an organism. Moreover, the research program is to include an investigation of treatment protocols which are being developed in the public and private sectors for illnesses resulting from chemical and other environmental exposures.

Once again, I'd like to thank Chairman PORTER and the Appropriations Committee and staff for their cooperation in this effort. I look forward to learning about the progress of this research program as it is implemented, upon enactment of this bill.

HONORING THE REVEREND HARRY J. PILSON AND THE MOUNT PLEASANT BAPTIST CHURCH

HON. THOMAS M. DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 10, 1997

Mr. DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to the esteemed Pastor of the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, the Reverend Harry J. Pilson and the Mount Pleasant Baptist Church on