

his expulsion from France in 1941. It continues to this day through the ERC's successor organization, the International Rescue Committee. It has, to its credit, over 56 years of unbroken service to refugees and victims of oppression.

With the end of World War II and the defeat of fascism, the IRC assisted hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in Europe to re-build their shattered lives. Many came to the United States and were helped by the IRC to resettle and to become self-sufficient citizens in their new country.

The Iron Curtain that fell across Europe after the war produced a whole new set of refugees—those fleeing Stalin's dictatorship in the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe that had fallen under communist domination, not least the wonderful country of Hungary. The IRC, following in the steps of Varian Fry, was there to rescue them in flight, including, of course, tens of thousands of Hungarians.

Since the fall of the Berlin wall, the IRC has been involved in every major refugee crisis up to this day—making it the largest non-sectarian refugee relief organization in the world. Rescue teams are now at work in Bosnia, in Rwanda, in Cambodia and in 20 more countries, bringing life-saving humanitarian aid, medical care, shelter and education to well over a million refugees. In addition, the IRC continues to resettle large numbers of political refugees coming to the United States. And, the IRC remains a strong voice advocating for refugees, their rights and their needs.

This, then is a powerful legacy of Varian Fry. His heroic exploits are the inspiration for the International Rescue Committee in its world-wide efforts to bring help, aid and comfort to the world's refugees. His light, which shone so dimly in the Hotel Splendide and on the rue Grignan, shines brightly today, relieving human suffering and providing refuge to so many who seek freedom and protection from a well-founded fear of persecution.

I thank you for being here today to pay tribute to a selfless hero whose rescue of endangered lives inspires so many of my colleagues at the International Rescue Committee. Each of us endeavors to honor in our work his resourcefulness, courage and fortitude.

TRIBUTE TO HOWARD METZENBAUM

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the legacy of Howard Metzenbaum, former Senator from the State of Ohio. Howard Metzenbaum was a giant who strode across the political landscape of Ohio for five decades. Some called him a rabble-rouster with a fierce independent streak. The Washington Post called him "an uncompromising, indefatigable and often irascible champion of liberal causes." I always found him to be an inspiration, a breath of fresh air who was willing to do whatever necessary to defend the interests of working people.

Howard Metzenbaum had a remarkably varied career. After graduating from law school in 1941, he became a labor lawyer in Cleveland and then the very successful owner of a string of parking lots. He started one of the Nation's first car rental companies, now known as Avis.

In 1949, as a member of the Ohio Senate, he won passage of legislation regulating consumer credit. After several attempts, he won a seat in the U.S. Senate in 1976, starting an 18-year career that placed him at the forefront of some of the most important issues of our time. It was Senator Howard Metzenbaum who championed plant closing legislation and got the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification [WARN] Act passed over the President's veto. He was a vocal opponent of corporate welfare before such opposition became fashionable. When he retired in 1994, Democrats and Republicans alike hailed him as the conscience of the U.S. Senate.

It is a fitting tribute to Senator Howard Metzenbaum that the Federal Courthouse at Public Square and Superior in Cleveland bear his name. The courthouse is a symbol of justice, and Howard Metzenbaum built his career on fighting for justice, fairness, and dignity for all citizens. I commend this bill to my fellow Members of Congress and urge its passage.

MAX BARTIKOWSKY HONORED BY JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the opportunity to pay tribute today to a businessman and community leader from my congressional district, Mr. Max Bartikowsky. Next month the Jewish Community Center will honor Max at a surprise brunch. I am proud to have been asked to participate in this event.

Max is the owner of one of Wilkes-Barre's finest retailers, Bartikowsky Jewelers. The store has been an institution in downtown Wilkes-Barre ever since Max's grandfather emigrated from Poland and founded the store 100 years ago. While other stores have fled for suburban shopping malls, it is a testament to Max's commitment to Wilkes-Barre that his store has remained as a cornerstone of downtown.

The business has always been an extension of the Bartikowsky family's commitment to civic involvement by being a key supporter of the United Way, Northeast Philharmonic, American Heart Association, Hospice St. John, the Diabetes Association, Children's Miracle Network, and the city of Wilkes-Barre fire and police departments. Max has built on and continued the family's tradition both personally and professionally.

Max's personal community activities also fill a long list. He is an active supporter of Wyoming Seminary, a prestigious local educational institution. Along with Wyoming Seminary, Max is also involved in supporting the Rose Brader Clinic where he was named person of the year in 1991. He has also been a strong supporter of Penn State University and has been active in the Knights of Saber, Wilkes-Barre Lions. His personal dedication to the Jewish Community Center is also well known.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with the members of the Jewish Community Center to recognize and pay tribute to an amazing and generous individual. I send my best wishes as the JCC honors one of its most distinguished and dedicated leaders.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM

HON. RON KIND

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, for those who are interested in passing legislation in Congress that will fix the broken campaign finance system, there appears to be good news on the horizon. Last week the U.S. Senate began debate on the McCain-Feingold campaign finance reform bill.

In this House the future of campaign finance reform is not so clear. The leadership in the House has offered conflicting opinions on whether or not they will allow a debate on this issue.

Many Members have been pressuring the House leaders to schedule consideration of any one of the reform bills currently pending in Congress. I have been making a daily statement on the floor of the House demanding a vote on finance reform. It is my hope that these combined efforts, and the pressure being put on Members of Congress by the public, will force the leadership to reconsider their opposition to debate on a bill.

However, my greatest fear is not that we won't get a vote, but that we will get a campaign finance reform bill containing a poison pill that will doom the legislation.

The Republican leadership would like nothing better than to pass a campaign finance bill containing a poison pill that would force a veto by the President. That way the Republicans get political credit for passing a campaign finance reform bill while knowing full well that the bill will never become law.

This works if you are satisfied with the status quo, and many Members of Congress are satisfied with the current system. It got them elected, so why change it to give their opponents a chance to defeat them.

That approach may serve the self-interests of the Members of this House, but it would be an injustice to the people we represent. If we are going to actually see real reform, the next few days are crucial. I hope the leadership in the House of Representatives will see the wisdom of cleaning up the political process by passing meaningful campaign finance reform legislation.

OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIPS

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support educational freedom for the children of Washington, DC. By providing parents a choice in education, kids in the District of Columbia can be rescued from drug-infested, run down schools.

The fiscal year 1998 District of Columbia appropriations bill contains a provision to allow parents in Washington, DC, to choose schools for their children with the help of opportunity scholarships. Sadly, President Clinton has threatened to veto this legislation if opportunity scholarships are included in the bill.

Today, thousands of children in this city are literally being robbed of their futures because

this administration and congressional Democrats are afraid to anger powerful labor unions who support the status quo. Mr. Speaker, this is no longer about conservative versus liberal values—the parents of this city's children don't want to make this political—they simply want their children to get a quality education. Right now, President Clinton refuses to let that happen.

Mr. Speaker, we can not afford to fail our children. There is nothing more important than the quality of our schools and the value of the education they provide. Without opportunity, we are shortchanging our children and depriving them of any hope for a prosperous future.

The truth is, we are losing children every day to the lure of drugs and crime because inner-city schools are failing to give them the tools they need to succeed. Mr. Speaker, many of these children may still get the chance to receive the education they deserve if their parents are given the choice to send them to quality schools.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to send the President a bill that contains opportunity scholarships. We should let those who would rather trap children in poor schools where crackpipes and drug syringes are as plentiful as pencils explain why they think choice and opportunity in education is such a bad idea.

RECOGNIZING THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S BUSINESS COUNCIL

HON. JOHN J. LaFALCE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. LaFALCE. Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the Small Business Committee, I am proud that the reauthorization bill we reported contains strong support for women business owners. I am particularly delighted that our committee has reauthorized and expanded the National Women's Business Council.

As the Small Business Subcommittee Chair in the 1970's, I held a number of hearings on the unique challenges and obstacles faced by women business owners. Remembering these hearings, the late Gillian Rudd, then president of NAWBO, approached me shortly after I became chairman of the House Small Business. She said, "Congressman LaFALCE, now that you are Chairman of the full Committee, I hope you will do something what's never been done before. I hope you will take up the cause of women business owners and give them a seat at the table." That is exactly what I intended to do.

I asked Gillian to help me in preparing a series of hearings on women entrepreneurs. We searched for the best minds in the United States to learn about the business environment that was out there for women business owners. The hearings were a tremendous success, and we took our marching orders from the women who testified. We have learned that there were a number of things that Congress needed to do immediately to support the growth of women owned enterprises.

First and foremost, we needed to create a National Women's Business Council to be a voice for women entrepreneurs within the Federal Government. We also knew that there would need to be an interagency task force,

comprised of representatives from all the Federal agencies to work with the council in a public/private sector partnership. Finally, it was essential that we also come up with a business training program developed for women addressing their unique needs.

On the heels of receiving this information, delivered to the Small Business Committee in landmark testimony, I introduced and Congress passed H.R. 5050. That bill, the Women's Business Ownership Act of 1988, included several very important initiatives, including the creation of the National Women's Business Council. This was the first step in achieving our goals.

Now, 10 years later, we have accomplished all three of these goals. I am deeply gratified to have played a role in the establishment of all three and to see the fruits these efforts have borne. While it is so often repeated, I still think it merits mentioning just one more time. There are more than 8 million women business owners in the United States today, represented by 1,000 women's business organizations. Looking back on where we were two decades ago when this all began. I am still amazed at how the numbers of women entrepreneurs have skyrocketed. With greater growth in women's business ownership on the horizon, it is even more incumbent upon us to find ways to help these businesses succeed.

On July 21, the National Women's Business Council, in partnership with the Federal Reserve System and the Small Business Administration, held an Access to Capital and Credit Expert Policy Workshop in my district, in my hometown of Buffalo, NY. The purpose of the workshop was to make recommendations on how to expand the access to capital and credit. During this particular workshop, one of ten held around the country, we focused on the growth in western New York. The National Women's Business Council has compiled the recommendations made by the great women entrepreneurs of Buffalo and other women around the country into a report to be released tomorrow. I look forward to working with the Council on their implementation.

I have been working with the National Women's Business Council since I helped to create it in 1988. They have been an incredible resource to me and my staff. They do a wonderful job of representing women business owners around the country before Congress and the President, a task to which they have dedicated themselves wholeheartedly. The council is comprised of prominent women business owners and national women's business organizations which represent millions of women entrepreneurs nationwide. It is currently chaired by Lillian Vernon, a true American success story. These accomplished women are a resource at our disposal.

In 1988, I held a series of hearings on the problems that women entrepreneurs face—the first series of its kind—that was compiled into a report entitled "New Economic Realities: The Role of Women Entrepreneurs." In it, I said that there is a great untapped gold mine that exists within the American economy. There is a pool of talent that is so rich, that if we could tap into it and exploit it, we could unleash a windfall for the American economy. We have finally begun to do that.

HMO ABUSE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 29, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of talk about fraud, waste, and abuse in health care. One type of fraud that does not get mentioned much—but which cheats the taxpayers and the beneficiaries out of billions of dollars a year—is the overpayment of HMO's under Medicare.

I would like to include in the RECORD a summary of a recent Prospective Payment Assessment Commission meeting, as prepared by Gray & Associates, a health consulting and reporting service. At the ProPAC meeting, the staff of this congressional advisory panel noted that the adjusted community rate data—the data that determines how much extra an HMO must provide its enrollees in benefits and services—is suspect.

I also include a letter I have sent to the Acting Medicare Administrator regarding overpayments to HMO's. The recent Denver HMO bidding demonstration—blocked by Congress and the courts—would, if implemented nationwide, save Medicare approximately \$2 billion a year while expanding the level of benefits to enrollees.

Mr. Speaker, the current system must be reformed, ASAP.

ADJUSTED COMMUNITY RATES

The adjusted community rate (ACR) is used to establish a risk contract's premium for Medicare, as well as the plan's supplemental benefits. The form filled out by plans demonstrates an actuarial equivalence between the plan's benefits and fee for service benefits, and establishes the difference that is to be returned to the Medicare program either through waived premiums, extra benefits, or actual payments back to Medicare (no one does the third option).

Staff believes that the forms could be used to glean useful cost information concerning the plans. This information could be used to determine the fairness of Medicare payment rates. However, the current reliability of the data is highly suspect, mainly because the information contained therein is not audited. In fact, staff states that some plans pick their final benefit plans, and make the numbers on the form fit the final plan. Other plans submit forms showing net losses per Medicare patient, which intuitively one knows cannot be accurate otherwise the plans would not be financially able to participate year after year in Medicare.

The BBA now requires that the ACRs be audited to ensure the quality of the data contained in them. Staff wants to take the now fairly reliable data and try to reconcile benefits packages with particular ACRs. Staff also hopes its analysis will reveal whether the new auditing requirements effect any major changes in the ACRs, which might, in turn, effect payment changes in the Medicare risk contract program.

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, September 23, 1997.

NANCY-ANN MIN DEPARLE,
*Acting Administrator, Health Care Financing
Administration, Washington, DC.*

DEAR NANCY-ANN: Enclosed is a page from a health care newsletter which I received today. It reports former Administrator Vladeck as saying that before the Denver