

troubled that this provision gives the Secretary of Defense no direction on the need to provide for the protection of pension and other employee benefits in the conversion process, especially for those employees whose length of service would reasonably entitle them to expect such benefits.

Second, I am sorely disappointed in the conference reports resolution in regards to a Senate amendment which would have elevated the Chief of the National Guard Bureau to a four-star ranking and made the Chief a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS]. Although I did not support putting the Guard chief of the JCS, I do believe that there is currently a serious problem in resourcing for the Guard which can be improved by elevating the Chief of the Guard. I supported giving the Chief a fourth star and appointing him to the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee [JROC]. Sec. 901, H.R. 1119 instead creates two new assistants to the Chairman of the JCS: one for National Guard Matters and one for Reserve Matters.

Two 2-stars do not make a four star, nor does it solve the real budget problem within the Army. When I and several of my colleagues wrote the Chairman of the National Security Committee to urge the inclusion of legislation that would elevate the Chief of the National Guard Bureau from 3-star to 4-star general and place him on the Joint Requirements Oversight Committee, I believe then, as I believe now, that this is the right thing to do.

There are those critics that argue that making the Chief of the National Guard a four-star would be disruptive to the total force policy or is not justified. I disagree, because there is precedence, just look at the Marine Corps, the commandant of the Marine Corps at one point in time was a three-star general and did not have a seat on the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The Marine Corps to my knowledge are to this day part of the Navy. The Marine Corps to this day is a shining example of the total force concept, fully integrated across the spectrum and fully funded. Another example is the Coast Guard, while not part of the Department of Defense in peacetime, they support the Navy in times of war. Currently, the Coast Guard has a four-star admiral and four three-star vice admirals, for a \$3.8 billion force of more than 75,000 active and reserve Coast Guard members across the country. The Coast Guard does a tremendous job of supporting maritime law and drug enforcement, maritime transportation support and disaster assistance in their domestic role. Now let's compare this to the National Guard. The National Guard has a three-star lieutenant general for \$10 billion force of more than 466,000 full-time and part-time members in the Army and Air National Guard who are performing vital missions throughout the country and the world right this minute. This in itself is justification for the National Guard to have a four-star, not to mention that the National Guard has 54 percent of the Army's combat force structure and is located in over 2,700 communities in all States and territories.

Finally, concerning sec. 411, end strengths for Selected Reserve, where the Army National Guard was reduced in endstrength by 5,000 spaces. I do not support reducing the Army National Guard endstrength. The bottomline here is that the Army National Guard is the only service component, active or reserve, to be reduced below the President's

budget request. The conference report cites the Army off-site of June 5, 1997 as the reason for reducing the endstrength of the Army National Guard. As I understand the results of the off-site, the active Army should have been reduced by 5,000 spaces as well, but that was not included in this bill. In fact the Army is not able to meet its endstrength. In fact the Army National Guard is currently meeting its endstrength goals. It makes it very difficult to justify reducing the Army National Guard, in essence punishing them for meeting their strength.

In conclusion, I believe that the provisions I have mentioned do nothing to enhance the resourcing and readiness issues faced by the National Guard and Reserve. I do believe that we should revisit these provisions next year as we prepare the fiscal year 1999 Defense authorization bill.

HONORING HERRICKS MIDDLE SCHOOL

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Herricks Middle School in Albertson, NY, which has recently received a Blue Ribbon Award for academic excellence by the Department of Education. The school will be honored in a ceremony with Education Secretary, Richard Riley on November 6.

Herricks Middle School strives to give every student the most well rounded education possible by fostering each child's cognitive, social, and physical development. Students are required to take a seventh grade guidance class, where they can initiate a positive relationship with a guidance counselor, early on in their academic careers. The school's academic teams, which consist of teachers, guidance counselors, administrators, and parents, focus upon each individual student, in order to provide critical support during difficult times. Herricks Middle School also has a diverse and innovative extracurricular program.

The school has also placed an important focus upon computer literacy programs. The administration has recognized that a computer in a classroom may not necessarily foster a student's education unless a teacher is fully versed in the proper technology. Thus, a part time staff member has been hired to train teachers in computer technology and help them apply it in a classroom setting. Since this training program was implemented, computer use by teachers has tripled.

The school's innovative curriculum also includes interdisciplinary units on the Holocaust and immigration. All of these factors have combined to create an extraordinary learning environment. The average daily attendance rate at Herricks Middle School exceeds an astounding 96 percent. The school's average standardized test scores in reading and math fall between the 82d and 92d percentiles nationwide. Much of this success can also be attributed to the leadership and commitment of the school's principal, Dr. Seth Weitzman.

Herricks Middle School is working to build tomorrow's leaders through innovative academic and guidance programs, constant teacher training, and diversified extracurricular

activities. I ask all of my colleagues to join me in honoring this school for their extraordinary work and congratulating them on receiving the prestigious Blue Ribbon Award.

HONORING THE SUNY/BROOKLYN EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY CENTER

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to acknowledge that on November 7, 1997, the SUNY/Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center will celebrate 30 years of service to the borough of Brooklyn and the city of New York.

The center was established in 1966 by Governor Nelson Rockefeller, the New York State Legislature, and State University of New York. Throughout the years, the Brooklyn Center has served over 200,000 residents, enrolled 50,000 students and graduated approximately 28,000 adults and young adults. These graduates have become high school principals, corporate executives, college professors, city and State employees, secretaries, computer technicians, and mechanical drafters. Over the past 5 years the Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center's alumni have contributed \$7 million to the city and State treasuries. This program has also made it possible for 800 former welfare recipients to become gainfully employed.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and a privilege for me to congratulate SUNY/Brooklyn Educational Opportunity Center, and to wish them many more productive and prosperous years.

HONORING GREG LAIS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF WILDERNESS INQUIRY

HON. BRUCE F. VENTO

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, on October 22 I had the pleasure of hosting the signing event that celebrated the establishment of a general framework of cooperation—a memorandum of understanding—between the Federal land management agencies and a private entity; Wilderness Inquiry. These agreements have a positive goal of increasing opportunities for people of all abilities to get out and enjoy America's public lands. I was joined by Chairman Jim Hansen and a number of representatives of Federal agencies who have dedicated their work to increasing access to our Nation's special places for all Americans. None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary efforts of an extraordinary Minnesotan, Greg Lais.

Since 1978, Wilderness Inquiry has served 30,000 people of all abilities on trips throughout North America, Europe and Australia. Greg Lais observes, "Meeting new friends, exploring wilderness areas, and participating in exciting outdoor activities is what Wilderness Inquiry is all about. Be prepared to step out of your normal routine and enter a world where time is measured by the sun and movement governed by wind and weather."

"In addition to having fun," Lais continues, "you'll have the opportunity to learn about a variety of topics, including the history and ecology of the areas you travel. And, since Wilderness Inquiry strives to include a diverse group of participants—including persons with disabilities—it's likely that you'll learn a bit about other people—and yourself—in the process."

With the signing of a memorandum of understanding [MOU] between Wilderness Inquiry and the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, more people will have the wealth of opportunities observed as our American experience and legacy. Wilderness Inquiry's expertise in service delivery will surely help the agencies achieve the goal of providing outdoor recreation programs and services that are accessible to all Americans. And Wilderness Inquiry's expertise is readily apparent: more than half of the people Wilderness Inquiry serve have physical, cognitive or emotional disabilities. Indeed, when a person with a disability calls Wilderness Inquiry and expresses a desire to experience the outdoors, Greg Lais and his talented staff figure out how to do it—not why it can't and shouldn't be done.

Wilderness Inquiry's program focus of integrating people from diverse backgrounds and ability levels has proven effective at fostering dignity, independence, and social integration. A lot of positive steps have already been taken. In 1991 Wilderness Inquiry completed a study on behalf of the National Council on Disability to determine the ability of people with disabilities to enjoy wilderness. That study came forward with a number of recommendations, many of which are currently being implemented. These includes suggestions and programs for training Federal employees, guidelines for policy implementation, and recommendations for service providers.

But much more remains to be done, and that is what this special agreement between Wilderness Inquiry and the Federal land managers is focused upon. It signals a Federal agency commitment to making our public lands accessible so that all Americans appreciate our rich natural and cultural heritage. The benefits to all Americans will be great. Customers will be better served and more satisfied, awareness of our great outdoors will be enhanced, and we will be on the road to achieving equal access to the comprehensive civil rights for persons with disabilities included in the Americans With Disabilities Act.

That is why I rise today to pay tribute to Greg Lais, a person who embodies the spirit of serving the public that makes this Minnesotans such a special person. His organization is doing good work, and for that I believe he deserves the respect and thanks of this House, this Congress, and the American people.

IN HONOR OF GRANT A. KNEISELY
ON HIS ATTAINMENT OF EAGLE
SCOUT

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Grant Kniseley of Bay Village, OH, who will be honored for his attainment of Eagle Scout.

The attainment of Eagle Scout is a high and rare honor requiring years of dedication to self-improvement, hard work, and the community. Each Eagle Scout must earn 21 merit badges, 12 of which are required, including badges in: lifesaving; first aid; citizenship in the community; citizenship in the Nation; citizenship in the world; personal management of time and money; family life, environmental science; and camping.

In addition to acquiring and proving proficiency in those and other skills, an Eagle scout must hold leadership positions within the troop where he learns to earn the respect and hear the criticism of those he leads.

The Eagle Scout must live by the Scouting Law, which holds that he must be: trustworthy, loyal, brave, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, clean, and reverent.

And the Eagle Scout must complete an Eagle Project, which he must plan, finance, and evaluate on his own. It is no wonder that only 2 percent of all boys entering scouting achieve this rank.

My fellow colleagues, let us recognize and praise Grant for his achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and unable to vote on rollcall vote Nos. 566 and 567. Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on rollcall No. 566, on ordering the previous question to House Resolution 288, and "no" on rollcall No. 567, on agreeing to House Resolution 288. I ask unanimous consent to have this statement appear in the appropriate place in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

A TRIBUTE TO THOMAS J. MURRAY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 4, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, one of my more remarkable constituents, Thomas J. Murray of Walden, NY, is going to be honored by the Walden Rotary Club in a few weeks for a lifetime of devotion to his community and his family. I would like to take this opportunity to share his life story with our colleagues so that they can join us in saluting an outstanding American citizen.

Tom Murray was born on August 3, 1914, in the town of Newburgh on a family homestead

populated not only by his parents, but also by his three siblings, Dorothy, Anna, and Jack, by aunts, uncles, cousins, and other relatives. There were many adults interested in the future of young Tom who made certain the young man was raised on the straight and narrow. Tom was a student in the Newburgh school system and a graduate of Newburgh Free Academy.

In World War II, Tom was drafted into the service, and served in the 20th Air Force 58th Bomb Group as an engineer and a rear gunner on a B-29 aircraft. The 58th Bomb Group was one of the outstanding combat groups of the Second World War, and Tom was instrumental as an executive board member in keeping their annual reunion running smoothly for over 40 years. To honor those who served in the Army Air Corp, the group commissioned an original oil painting of the B-29 which now is on display at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the Naval Academy at Annapolis, the Air Force Academy in Colorado, and at the Air and Space Museum right down the street from the Capitol.

In 1942, Tom married the former Helen Alice Romash, now deceased. Helen was from Walden, NY, about 7 miles west of Tom's home in the town of Newburgh. The young couple settled in Walden where Tom remains until this day, even after the passing of Helen a few years ago. Tom and Helen had two lovely children, Patricia and Dennis.

When World War II ended, Tom went to work for the DuPont Chemical Co. in Newburgh. In the mid-1960's, when DuPont moved their plant to South Carolina, Tom went along to help set up the new plant down south. However, he refused to give up his Walden home and returned to check his home and to visit family and friends quite often during his 1 year in South Carolina. Tom finally decided to come back home to Walden once and for all.

Tom is the personification of the community activist. A long time parishioner at Most Precious Blood Catholic Church, he served for many years as an usher and was an important component in the successful efforts to raise building funds for the parochial school.

Tom also served as chairman of the March of Dimes for the town of Montgomery, of which Walden is a part, and was in charge of the food distribution program for seniors and low-income families.

Tom has also been a mainstay in the Walden Volunteer Fire Department for many years. He has served as an on-the-line fireman and as a fire policeman.

He has served as a member of the planning committee, and thus played a major role in the planned growth of the village of Walden, a concept he has always supported.

Tom is known in his home community and throughout his home County of Orange as "Mr. Republican." He has never wavered in his support of Republican causes, and is known for his outspoken honesty. He recently celebrated his 30th anniversary as a Republican committeeman representing Election District No. 8, and from 1982 until he voluntarily stepped down in September of this year having served as chairman of the Republican Committee of the Town of Montgomery.

Mr. Speaker, I have always considered it an honor to consider Tom Murray as a friend. Throughout his remarkable career, he is an individual who can always be counted upon for honest answers, penetrating questions, and