

come to an end. To achieve this result, it is far better to use peaceful measures and end the longstanding violence. Thus, we must embrace Leyla Zana for risking her life for the Kurdish people, not through violence, but through peaceful and democratic activism.

So, Mr. Speaker, I salute those who are fasting today in support of the freedom of Leyla Zana. And I say to the Government of Turkey: in the name of humanity, free Leyla Zana.

THE COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 1997

HON. NANCY L. JOHNSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, today my colleague, NITA LOWEY and I are introducing the Community Employment Partnership Act [CEPA] which is designed to encourage the not-for-profit community to increase their participation in the national initiative to move more than 2 million Americans from welfare dependency into productive work. Through CEPA, not-for-profit employers, for the first time, will be allowed to participate in the work opportunity tax credit hiring incentives that are currently available to for-profit companies which hire entry-level workers.

During the last Congress, when we enacted welfare reform, we embarked on a bold new initiative to move millions of able-bodied welfare recipients into the work force. At the time we understood this new initiative, many of us realized that if the private sector were to provide jobs for those leaving the welfare rolls, they would need an incentive to offset the added costs of hiring, training, and retaining a category of people who face significant obstacles to succeeding in the workplace. These obstacles include problems with minimal job skills, low self-esteem, and little, if any, work history. In order to encourage for-profit employers to hire welfare recipients, I strongly supported the enactment of the work opportunity tax credit which is designed to offset the added costs involved.

Unfortunately, at that time, we did not develop a mechanism for extending these hiring tax incentives to the nonprofit community. In many cases, the largest employers in inner-city and rural communities, where most welfare recipients reside, are nonprofits such as hospitals, universities, museums, and community-based organizations. That they are not eligible is ironic since many nonprofit employers view as part of their primary mission service to those on welfare. As a result, nonprofits are often more acclimated to working with hard-to-employ individuals than their for-profit brethren. Another advantage of making not-for-profit employers eligible for WOTC is that they often provide full-time jobs with a career path, and generally offer their employees benefits.

In addition, numerous stories have come to light regarding the time and financial burden faced by welfare recipients who must travel long distances from their homes in the inner city or in rural America to the suburbs where most new jobs are becoming available. For the welfare recipient, who generally does not have a car, this means long and costly trips on public or privately organized transportation.

The long hours that newly employed welfare recipient must be away from home requires them to string together unreliable and often expensive day care arrangements, including relying on family members, friends, and day care centers. Allowing not-for-profit organizations eligibility for tax credits would, for those recipients able to find employment in their communities, significantly reduce the travel burden and in turn, help to reduce the critical day care problems faced by those hoping to move from welfare to work.

Despite the ideal match between the mission, location, and type of jobs offered by not-for-profits, they have not participated in the welfare to work initiative to the extent we would like because insufficient resources have been made available to them to help offset the added costs involved in hiring those on welfare. CEPA would help to overcome this obstacle by reducing the largest tax burden faced by not-for-profits—the payroll tax—by allowing them to offset their total Federal payroll tax burden by any work opportunity tax credits earned for hiring an eligible worker. The Community Employment Partnership Act would: Track the existing eligibility standards for the work opportunity tax credit; and provide not-for-profits with a graduated tax credit against their total Federal payroll taxes of 20 percent versus 25 percent under WOTC from the date of hire for the first \$6,000 in wages paid an eligible worker by a not-for-profit for those who work at least 120 hours and to up 399 hours; and 30 percent versus 40 percent under WOTC from the date of hire for the first \$6,000 in wages paid an eligible worker by a not-for-profit for those who work at least 400 hours.

The reduction in the credit amounts equalize the value of the credit between nonprofit employers and for-profit employers. This is because under WOTC, the amount of the employer's wage deduction is reduced by the amount of the credit which has the effect of reducing the value of the tax incentive to the for-profit employer.

The credits would be taken against a not-for-profit employer's quarterly payroll tax liability.

A payment to the Social Security trust fund would continue to be treated as having been made on the date it is ordinarily made.

Both Congresswoman LOWEY and I strongly believe that the enactment of the Community Employment Partnership Act is important if we are to enlist the not-for-profit community into providing good jobs to the millions of Americans who will be coming off the welfare rolls in the coming years.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BROWNFIELDS RECLAMATION ACT OF 1997

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Brownfields Reclamation Act of 1997. This bill is good for the American people and good for the country.

The Brownfields Reclamation Act of 1997 creates jobs, improves the health and safety of the American people, promotes economic development, and cleans up the environment.

One of the most critical environmental and economic problems facing our Nation's cities and rural communities today is the tremendous difficulty in redeveloping abandoned industrial and/or commercial sites and properties, due to many years of environmental contamination.

Not only have we found cleanup costs to be high, the potential liabilities for past contamination discourage prospective purchasers and developers from investing in the renewal of abandoned urban and rural properties. This compounding situation contributes dramatically to joblessness and poverty across the Nation.

As such, contaminated properties also end up contributing to suburban sprawl, compromised health and safety, and exacerbation of the problems associated with job loss, frustration, despair, and poverty in rural and urban America. This national concern has come to be known as the "Brownfields problem."

Mr. Speaker, my legislation, the Brownfields Reclamation Act of 1997 will enhance efforts of State and local jurisdictions to improve their physical environments. It will reduce the public health risks from exposure to contaminated sites. And, it will promote economic development and growth by increasing business and employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, while we still have a long way to go with regard to restoring neighborhoods and communities, the Brownfields Reclamation Act of 1997 represents a giant step forward in the revitalization of our cities and rural areas that have been adversely impacted by contaminated sites and related properties.

This bill reaffirms our Nation's commitment to revitalized communities across this country. I look forward to working with my colleagues, the administration, community organizations, and others to ensure that this critical legislation, the Brownfields Reclamation Act, is enacted into law.

IN HONOR OF KENNETH BLOOMHORST FOR HIS ENDURING SYMBOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to pay tribute to Kenneth Bloomhorst for his contribution to environmental protection in this country. Mr. Bloomhorst has the distinction of having created the symbol that represents the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Created over 25 years ago, his work remains the symbol for the Agency that is recognized around the country and in many parts of the world for the protection of the environment and our Nation's health. Mr. Bloomhorst, who was vice president and art director for an Indianapolis advertising agency, MWB, Inc., illustrated the seal and his firm contributed it to the EPA.

On October 18, 1971, then President Richard Nixon signed Executive Order No. 11628 to establish a seal for the EPA and provided the following description of Mr. Bloomhorst's creation.

"A flower with a bloom which is symbolic of all the elements of the environment. The

bloom is a sphere, the component parts of which represent the blue sky, green earth, blue-green water. A white circle within the sphere denotes either the sun or the moon. All are symbolic of a clean environment and are superimposed on a disc with a white background, circled by the title 'UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY' in blue letters."

Mr. Bloomhorst, in an interview with the Fairborn Daily Herald in November 1971, said, "The symbol at a quick glance represents a flower, but it means even more when inspected closely. The flower is like the mother earth. If it is not protected, it will wither and die. The purpose of the EPA is to keep the environment clean, alive and beautiful."

Symbols are important in our society, just as are our actions. Mr. Bloomhorst's seal was created at the dawn of the American environmental movement. Today, a quarter century later, environmental protection remains one of Americans' most important values. Yet too often, this value has been portrayed as in conflict with other values, such as economic growth and job creation even though it has been shown time and again that environmental protection and economic growth can, and I would argue must, go hand in hand to guarantee a sustainable future for ourselves, our children, and the many generations to come.

The test for our society as we enter the next century is to preserve the value that Mr. Bloomhorst portrayed in the EPA seal and to integrate this value of environmental protection into the activities of all Americans and into the policies of our Government. Without the work of the EPA and the environmental laws that it has overseen, such as the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act, America would be a far more dangerous and unhealthy place than it is today. Those who have tried to undermine this agency on behalf of shortsighted, narrow interests have learned that the environment remains a perilous political battleground.

Mr. Bloomhorst today continues to be an illustrator with an interest in the environment. As environmental protection has been such an important focus in current events, I believed it was important to rise today to congratulate Mr. Bloomhorst for seeing his seal become a permanent fixture in our country's landscape and to thank him for his important contribution to our history.

THE BANK EXAMINATION REPORT PROTECTION ACT OF 1997

HON. BILL MCCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of legislation I am introducing, the Bank Examination Report Protection Act [BERPA] of 1997. This bill would establish that all confidential supervisory information shall be the property of the Federal banking agency that created or requested the information and shall be privileged from disclosure to any other person. The Federal banking agency may waive this privilege at its discretion. There are other appropriate exceptions in the bill, such as for the Comptroller General of the United States and for law enforcement.

Essentially, the issue of privilege is one that must be addressed. The fact that financial institutions may lose their privilege on information turned over to a regulator has made them more hesitant to share all relevant information with their regulators. This, in turn, makes it more difficult for the regulators to do a thorough job in their examinations of the institutions.

In fact, this legislation is strongly supported by all the affected Federal banking regulators. I would like to introduce into the record the letter that they have forwarded to me supporting this legislation. It is signed by: Alan Greenspan, Chairman of Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, Eugene A. Ludwig, Comptroller of the Currency, Norman E. D'Amours, Chairman of the National Credit Union Administration, Nicolas P. Retsinas, Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, and Andrew C. Hove, Chairman of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

I would like to make sure my colleagues are aware that this legislation would maintain existing privileges and protect any materials created by the regulators. This would not prevent litigants from discovering the underlying facts of any action. All nonprivileged sources would still be available in discovery. This would simply ensure that examination materials—the critically important function of which is facilitate free-flowing communication between the examiner and the institution to maximize the effectiveness of the supervisory process—are not turned into a weapon against the regulated financial institution.

BERPA would ensure that the safety and soundness of our institutions is maintained through a vigorous and thorough supervisory process. This process is not complete when institutions are not forthcoming with information for fear of having information that was at one time privileged suddenly become subject to subpoena. Therefore, not only does this help the supervisory process, but also the consumers and taxpayers that insure these institutions. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM, FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION, NATIONAL CREDIT UNION ADMINISTRATION, OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER OF THE CURRENCY, OFFICE OF THRIFT SUPERVISION,

September 17, 1997.

Hon. BILL MCCOLLUM,

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCCOLLUM: Thank you for requesting our comments on the draft Bank Examination Report Protection Act of 1997. The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Office of Thrift Supervision, and the National Credit Union Administration (Agencies) support the proposed legislation because it will help protect the integrity of the examination process.

First, the legislation will help preserve the cooperative, non-adversarial exchange of information by supervised institutions with their examiners and the candid internal analysis of examiners, by codifying and strengthening the examination privilege. Second, the proposed legislation will enforce existing, nationwide uniform procedures for handling and accessing supervisory information requiring third party litigants to seek supervisory information directly from the

Agencies and not indirectly from the supervised institutions. Third, the proposed legislation will resolve the supervised institutions' concerns that their privileges will be waived if they voluntarily permit the Agencies to have access to privileged information that is otherwise essential to an examiner's assessment of safety and soundness. We believe that the proposed legislation favorably resolves many of the unsettled issues regarding the handling of and access to supervisory information, while preserving a process, including judicial review, by which third parties may seek access to supervisory information. Indeed, the Agencies will continue to seek to accommodate the reasonable requests of third party litigants and to release information in appropriate circumstances.

We hope this responds fully to your request. If we may be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our respective Agencies.

Sincerely,

EUGENE A. LUDWIG,
Comptroller, Office
of the Comptroller
of the Currency.

ANDREW C. HOVE,
Chairman, Federal
Deposit Insurance
Corporation.

ALAN GREENSPAN,
Chairman, Board
of Governors of the
Federal Reserve
System.

NICOLAS P. RETSINAS,
Director, Office of
Thrift Supervision.

NORMAN E. D'AMOURS,
Chairman, National
Credit Union Administration.

HONORING JOSEPH WASSER

HON. MAURICE D. HINCHEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take just a moment to congratulate Joe Wasser upon his retirement at the end of this year. Joe has served as Sheriff of Sullivan County up in my district for the past 20 years. But that alone far from captures the breadth and depth of his service to the public. Joe has served as a wonderful role model to us all by being not only a very fine public servant but also a plain old-fashioned good citizen. Joe's many achievements truly are too numerous to mention, but with this session of Congress winding to a close I just wanted to say congratulations to him and wish him many more years of happiness and good health.

THE PARENTS AND TEACHERS KNOW BEST ACT

HON. LINDSEY O. GRAHAM

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, November 9, 1997

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. Speaker, I am introducing legislation today, the Parents and Teachers Know Best Act, that would send funds currently appropriated to the Goals 2000 Program directly to every local school district in the Nation with few strings attached.