

on Ethnic Minorities of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia, to offer guidance and mediation to the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and representatives of the Albanian minority in resolving the issue of higher education in the Albanian language, are commendable;

(5) the President should express to the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia the strong support of the Government of the United States for measures that will contribute to democracy and stability in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, including efforts to ensure access to higher education in the Albanian language;

(6) the President should offer appropriate support for the efforts of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe to resolve the issue of access to higher education in the Albanian language; and

(7) the President should offer appropriate support for efforts by the Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to ensure access to higher education in the Albanian language, including assistance for the establishment of necessary curricula and the provision of textbooks and related course materials.

#### CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TEAM AT OAK GROVE HIGH SCHOOL

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, today, I wish to recognize the members of the Oak Grove High School wrestling team and their coach, Bob Glasgow, for their outstanding achievements and continued excellence in the sport of wrestling.

During Coach Glasgow's career at Oak Grove High School, he has developed a wrestling program that is known for excellence and success. Last season, the Oak Grove wrestling team won numerous tournament championships as well as the district 6 championship for the eighth consecutive year. Under the direction of Coach Glasgow, ten exceptional wrestlers qualified for the State tournament.

This kind of outstanding achievement has been a tradition for Coach Glasgow and his wrestling team during his 14 years at Oak Grove High School. During Coach Glasgow's tenure as the wrestling coach, the Oak Grove wrestling team has won 8 State championships and has had 39 individual State champions. In addition, nine Oak Grove wrestlers have signed division 1 scholarships during this time period.

I wish to extend my congratulations to the Oak Grove High School wrestling team for their continued tradition of excellence.

#### MARCH 1997—NATIONAL EYE DONOR MONTH PROCLAMATION

HON. MICHAEL BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, March is National Eye Donor Month. All throughout the

country, the miracle of transplantation surgery is allowing people's lives to be enhanced or saved. Nationwide thousands of people are benefited every year through organ and tissue transplantation surgery. Today, I rise to request that we take a moment to focus on eye donation and on the importance of preserving and restoring sight through corneal transplantation.

The benefits of sight-restoring transplant surgeries extend well beyond the people who receive the transplants; they also extend to their families, friends, and communities. In recent years, the efforts of Congress, educators, and the media have had an enormous impact on the success of eye donation programs.

Corneal transplants have been performed since 1905, and eye banks have existed in this country for over 50 years. Since 1961, when the Eye Bank Association of America was founded, member eye banks have helped make possible over one-half million corneal transplants, with a success rate over 95 percent.

Every year, thousands of corneal transplants are performed across the country restoring precious sight to both the young and the old. The Eye Bank Association of America is the Nation's oldest transplant association and is dedicated to the restoration of sight through the promotion and advancement of eye banking. In 1995, over 44,000 corneas were made available by our Nation's eye banks for use in transplantation procedures. Additional eye donations were used for research, training, and other surgical procedures. While figures for 1996 are still being tallied, even greater totals are expected.

In fact, just outside my district, the Lions Club of Tampa, FL runs one of the largest eye banks in the world. The Central Florida Lions Eye and Tissue Bank restores sight to over 2,000 people each year. Nevertheless, the need for corneal transplants continues.

Many Americans do not realize that they have it in their power to give someone else the gift of sight. If you declare now that after your death, you want your eyes to be donated to an eye bank, your eyes can become someone's miracle—a gift of sight. This is a great opportunity and a great responsibility that all Americans should take very seriously.

Anyone can be a donor. Neither cataracts, poor eyesight, nor age prohibit one from donating. However, it is important for individuals who want to be donors to inform family members of their wishes.

We, in Congress, can lead the effort to educate the public about the need and importance of eye donation and encourage more Americans to become donors. We have joined the Eye Bank Association of America every year since 1983 in proclaiming a "National Eye Donor Month." The purpose of National Eye Donor Month is to remind all Americans that they have the power to make the miracle happen for someone and that we can make the tissue available. By making this proclamation, we call on all Americans to support us in promoting eye donation in order to enhance the lives of our fellow citizens through the restoration of sight.

#### INTRODUCTION OF MARKEY-BURTON BILL TO ENCOURAGE CONTENT-BASED TV RATINGS

HON. DAN BURTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the v-chip provision in the Telecommunications Act of 1996, which became law last year, was intended to help parents take control of what comes into their homes and their children's minds via the television set by allowing them to block out programs that they believe contain too much violence, sex, or adult language.

Under the 1996 act, the broadcast industry was encouraged to establish rules for rating violence, sex, and other indecent material so that parents would be able to make informed decisions on what programs their children could or could not watch.

However, rather than devising a system that truly informs parents about the content of the television programs, the entertainment industry has proposed an age-based rating system. This type of rating system fails our children because it does not provide parents with comprehensive information to make informed choices about what their children watch.

This age-based system is too broad and vague for parents. Parents have said over and over that they want a television rating system to tell them what's in a program, not who should view it. According to a nationwide survey conducted by the National Parent and Teachers Association, 80 percent of parents stated that they want separate ratings for sex, violence, and language content to help them make informed and educated evaluations of television shows.

The National PTA, the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Children's Defense Fund, the Family Research Council, and numerous other organizations have all criticized the age-based ratings system. Instead they advocated ratings based on program content to help parents with the ability to block out objectionable, content-specific programming.

Today, I am joining my colleague from Massachusetts, Congressman EDWARD J. MARKEY, and 11 other cosponsors, to introduce legislation that seeks to ensure that parents will be able to keep their children from watching violent programs. I would like to commend my colleague from Massachusetts for all the hard work he has done over the past few years to provide parents with a tool to make informed choices on what their children watch on television. This legislation encourages the broadcast industry to adopt a content-specific ratings system that would allow parents to block out violent programming. If the industry prefers, it can choose not to label those shows that are violent and can keep the age-based system. However, the broadcaster would not be allowed to televise programs that contain violent content during the hours of the day when children are most likely to comprise a substantial portion of the audience. Broadcasters have a choice—either adopt a content-specific programming system that allows parents to block out violent programs, or only air those shows during the times when the majority of children aren't watching television.

Parents want a content-based rating system to help them protect their children from being

exposed to inordinate amounts of violence, sex, and vulgar language on television. Hopefully, this bill will encourage the entertainment industry to do what is right for our Nation's children, and ultimately our Nation's future.

#### INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION

HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, today, I am reintroducing legislation that will permit the city of Tulare, CA's Tulare Redevelopment Agency to end a blight in the city's downtown area. This bill will give the agency control over Federal reversionary interest in railroad rights of way bisecting the very heart of the city.

Tulare is a city of 39,772 centrally located in California, approximately 45 miles south of Fresno, and 63 miles north of Bakerfield. The city and surrounding county face the daunting prospect of trying to provide jobs in an area that has an unemployment rate of over 16 percent. If allowed to redevelop land adjacent to the rail line, Tulare's Redevelopment Agency believes that it could generate over 370 jobs in 6 years because of the agency's plan to create a retail shopping area. Adding new businesses would end local citizens' need to travel to other cities for important family needs.

Unfortunately, the city cannot gain control over the core of its downtown area without this legislation. In the last century, Congress extended rights of way to railroads in order to encourage the creation of a rail transport system. The Southern Pacific Railroad received rights for tracks and land adjacent to those tracks within what is now Tulare. Because the Federal Government has a reversionary interest in the right of way and surrounding properties, the redevelopment agency cannot obtain control of all the 12 parcels of land along the rail line that the city wishes to redevelop. The city cannot condemn the Federal interest and as a result, cannot make use of anything the community might secure from the railroad.

The railroad and its successor, Union Pacific, run over 30 trains per day through the center of the city and as a result the trackage will probably never be abandoned under the law. The railroads will continue to argue that they also control the parcels of land along side the tracks because abandonment has not occurred. These adjoining parcels that the agency needs, however, are about as barren as barren can get.

Because the Federal Government has this reversionary interest, we have about 200 feet of weeds and sand on each side of the railroad tracks today. Commercial development of small shops east of the rail line and a cotton seed mill and family homes on the other side look out on blighted property. There is a vacant gas station, a root beer stand, and a railroad storage building in the area sought by the city but that is about all. The root beer stand operates on a short-term lease. The Tulare Redevelopment Agency's plan would preserve the railroad tracks while allowing this empty space in the center of town to be turned into more productive use.

The bill I am introducing clears the path for redevelopment. First, it gives the city clear title

to one piece of property which Tulare already purchased from Southern Pacific before learning that railroad law clouded the title. Second, it gives the city the Federal reversionary interest in 11 other parcels so that the city can then deal with the railroad owner and secure the remaining properties.

It is essential that we pass this bill without modification because the redevelopment plan cannot be made to work piecemeal. Following the practices of the past and confirming title in someone who has already bought a clouded title only solves part of the city's problem. To ensure coherent development of properties along the rail corridor, the redevelopment agency has to control all 11 parcels of land so planning, marketing, and community financing of the development are possible. Giving the city title to one piece of property will deny the city resources to continue developing. Forcing the city to come back to Congress each time an interest is transferred is a waste of the city's time and ours.

I urge my colleagues to join me in moving this legislation as fast as possible. Tulare wants to take control over its own economic destiny by putting lousy land to better use. Unless this bill is enacted, Congress will be in the way of a city that badly needs our help.

#### INTRODUCTION OF A BILL REQUESTING FAIR REPRESENTATION ON FEDERAL JUDICIAL CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, today I am reintroducing legislation which calls for fair representation on all Federal Judicial Circuit Court of Appeals. This legislation is a companion bill to S. 382, the Fairness in Judiciary Appointments Act of 1997. Furthermore, it is identical to H.R. 3045, which was introduced in 1996.

Currently, only the State of Hawaii does not have representation on their circuit court of appeals. In fact, it's been over 10 years since Judge Herbert Choy of Honolulu retired from the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals. Some States like Montana have only recently had a resident granted a judgeship. My bill would require that each State have at least one judge appointed to its circuit court of appeals. That way, all States would always have representation on the bench. The bill does not affect the President's historic power to appoint Federal judges.

Having each State represented on its respective circuit courts helps ensure that justice is blind and impartial. A report entitled "The Long Range Plans for Federal Courts," completed by the Judicial Conference of the United States in December 1995, noted, "Federal judicial credibility and accountability are fostered when appellate judges are drawn primarily from the region they will serve." This bill would add to the judicial credibility of the courts, because each State would have at least one judge representing and understanding its State law, business, and customs.

This legislation is about maintaining the integrity of our third branch of government, fairness, and representation. I strongly urge my

colleagues to support this bill and press for its passage.

#### SENSE-OF-CONGRESS RESOLUTION TO PRESERVE THE ANCESTRY QUESTION ON THE 2000 CENSUS LONG FORM

HON. CONSTANCE A. MORELLA

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 5, 1997*

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce a resolution today, along with 14 of my colleagues, to express the sense of Congress that the ancestry question on the census long form should be preserved.

In crafting this legislation, I have worked closely with my friends from the Working Group on Ancestry in the U.S. Census. Together, they represent all of America. I especially want to recognize the National Italian-American Foundation and the Arab-American Institute for their work in bringing people together today.

It is critically important that we preserve the ancestry question. We aren't trying to add to the census—we just want to ensure that the ancestry question is not omitted in 2000. The Census Bureau must submit to Congress by April 1, 1997, the material to be included on the 2000 census questionnaire. Since the 1990 census, there has been much debate over the long form, and quite frankly, I am afraid some of my colleagues want to eliminate it.

The census long form—including the ancestry question—is sent to approximately one in six households. It only constitutes about 6 percent of the census budget; it is far more costly to omit these questions. It is an important source of social and economic data about our population. The decennial census is the only reliable source of information about the ethnic composition of our Nation's population.

Members of Congress depend on accurate information. The ancestry question gives us insight into our communities and ethnic constituencies. We know the value of statistics on ethnicity and the importance of maintaining a national reservoir of accurate and up-to-date information about our society's changing demographic make up. If this data is not collected in Census 2000, we will lose the only reliable and nationally comparable source of information on ethnicity. Both the private and public sectors rely on the census long form for accurate information on our population.

Those who use ancestry data include: State, county, and municipal agencies; educators and human service providers; corporations; researchers; political leaders; and Federal agencies. They need this information to ensure that programs are inclusive, representative, and serve the needs of local populations. The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights needs the data to monitor discrimination based on national origin. Without the ancestry question, I fear that data on ethnicity will be incomplete or skewed.

We are a proud nation of immigrants, and the ancestry question helps us to preserve knowledge about our ethnic heritage for present policymakers and for future generations. The ancestry question provides important insights into who we are as a people, how our neighborhoods are constituted, and how