

Mr. Speaker, as a final thought, the word leadership is often applied to those who do not deserve it. In Bob Johnston's case, just the opposite is true. He was a leader on active duty and in retirement continued to be a leader to his fellow officers, showing them how to cope with the challenges of a changing world. Bob has been a credit to his country, the Retired Officers Association and to the entire retired community.

Bob resides in Springfield, VA, with his wife Elsie. The couple has two grown daughters.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

HON. WILLIAM F. GOODLING

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, today Mr. McKEON, Mr. CLAY, Mr. KILDEE and I have introduced a bill to extend the Higher Education Act of 1995. The Higher Education Act is one of the most important pieces of legislation we will be reviewing this Congress. The law enacted by this Congress which provides for the continuation of the Higher Education Act will establish Federal student aid policy for students and families through the year 2004. Our guiding principles will be: making college more affordable; simplifying the student aid system; and improving academic quality for students.

I am a firm believer that a postsecondary education is one of the keys to family security in this country. As parents, we all work hard in the hope that our children will have a better life and more opportunities than the prior generation. Unfortunately, it has become increasingly difficult for families to fulfill this dream.

Students and their families are worrying more and more about how they are going to pay for a postsecondary education. A recent General Accounting Office report notes that public 4-year colleges raised tuition 256 percent between 1980 and 1995, far outstripping the consumer price index and the rise in a typical family's income. Yet, college is no longer a luxury. Over the last decade, the earnings gap between youth with a postsecondary education and those without has continued to widen. New and advanced technology is dominating our economy and driving down the value of low-skilled jobs. At a time when a college education is no longer a luxury, families are finding themselves unable to save or borrow enough money to pay the bill.

As we begin our intensive review of the Higher Education Act and Federal student aid policy, we will be looking for ways to assist all Americans in their pursuit of an affordable, high-quality postsecondary education. Achieving this goal is critical to the survival and growth of this country.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1998

HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, today Mr. GOODLING, Mr. CLAY, Mr. KILDEE and I have in-

troduced a bill to extend the Higher Education Act of 1965. As we are just beginning the review process, the bill we are introducing today does not establish new policy or direction for Federal student aid. The final bill we plan on completing this year will focus on three main principles: making college affordable; simplifying the student aid system; and improving academic quality for students.

The Higher Education Act is a complex piece of legislation. Our proposals for changing Federal student aid policy will be formulated only after open and bipartisan discussions with the Administration, the higher education community, students, parents and our colleagues in the 105th Congress.

In today's information based economy, the importance of obtaining a quality postsecondary education is at an all-time high. Parents across the country have recognized the importance of sending their children to college and they strive to ensure that their children will enjoy a better life.

It is in this area of higher education that the Federal Government can have a very significant impact. The fact is that the combination of Federal grant and loan aid for fiscal year 1997 is expected to exceed \$37 billion dollars. This is good news for higher education in this country. Unfortunately, the cost of a college education has increased at about twice the rate of inflation since the early 1980's, making a college education one of the most costly investments facing American families today.

That is why our review of the Higher Education Act and Federal student aid policy will focus on strengthening opportunities for students to obtain an affordable, high quality postsecondary education. The law enacted by this Congress which establishes new and continues old Federal student aid policies will take us through the year 2004. It will significantly impact the lives of millions of students and their families, as well as the future of this country. I look forward to working with all my colleagues as we undertake this review.

TRIBUTE TO SUPERVISOR DERAN KOLIGIAN

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Supervisor Deran Koligian. Mr. Koligian is a man of soil and a man of service to all of Fresno County. He truly exemplifies what it means to be a family farmer.

As noted in a recent article in the Armenian General Benevolent Union (UGBU) magazine, Supervisor Koligian, who is serving his fourth term on the Fresno County Board of Supervisors, is a native of Fresno. His parents left their native home land during the dark days of the Armenian genocide and relocated in Fresno. Koligian faced hard times like many other Armenians who were often the subject of discrimination and ridicule. As a result, life was not always easy for the Armenian families who lived on "the other side" of the railroad tracks.

Koligian's father and the rest of the family did not surrender to the pressure of being newcomers to the United States. Instead, the elders of the community instilled in the first

generation of U.S.-born Armenians a message to concentrate on their education, work hard, and set goals. The words were taken to heart by Koligian. After graduating from Central High School, Koligian went onto Fresno State College and completed a degree in accounting and business administration. At the conclusion of his formal education, he entered into combat as an infantryman in the U.S. Army during World War II.

Upon returning to Fresno after World War II, Koligian began a career in farming and became involved in serving the community. Koligian served on the Fresno County School Board Association, the Fresno County Equal Opportunity Commission, and the Fresno Planning Commission. He also served 12 years as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Madison Elementary School, and 12 years on the board of Central High School before his election to the Fresno County Board of Supervisors.

Koligian oversees services in Fresno County such as public libraries, public schools, the sheriff's department, medical services, and the planning commission. Additionally, he also works with the probation department, courts, housing and tax collection agencies within the county.

Mr. Speaker, through the years, Deran Koligian has epitomized the hard work and integrity that our forefathers believed would make the United States a great and prosperous nation. The end result is a man who has served his community with professionalism and a no-nonsense attitude. I ask my colleagues to join me and pay tribute to a man who in the midst of so much else today, serves the public with as much substance as the soil of the Fresno land that he farms.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION TO ASSIST CONNECTICUT POLICE AND FIREFIGHTERS

HON. BARBARA B. KENNELLY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation on the single most important tax issue to roughly 1100 families in Connecticut.

This legislation would simply clear up a situation where erroneous state law has caused benefits that were intended to be treated as workmen's compensation to be brought into income on audit. In several states, including Connecticut, the state law providing these benefits for police and fire fighters included an irrebuttable presumption that heart and hypertension conditions were the result of hazardous work conditions.

In Connecticut, at least, the state law has been corrected so that while there is a presumption that such conditions are the result of hazardous work, the state or municipality involved could require medical proof. This change satisfies the IRS definition of workmen's compensation. Therefore, all this legislation would do is exempt from income those payments received by these individuals as a result of faulty state law but only for the three years—1989, 1990 and 1991. From January 1, 1992 forward those already receiving these benefits would have to meet the standard IRS test.

The importance of this legislation is that these individuals believed that they followed state law. The cities and towns involved believed that they followed state law and therefore all parties involved believed that these benefits were not subject to tax. However, the IRS currently has an audit project ongoing in CT and has deemed these benefits taxable. All this legislation says is that all parties involved made a good faith effort to comply with what they thought the law was. The state was in error. That error has been rectified but those individuals on disability should not be required to pay 3 years back taxes plus interest and penalties. Yet the interest and penalties on this tax continue to increase each day and are quite beyond the means of most of these families where the primary breadwinner is disabled.

This provision was reported by the Ways and Means Committee in 1992, passed the House on the suspension calendar, included in H.R. 11 and vetoed by then President Bush. This provision enjoys the bipartisan support of the entire Connecticut Congressional delegation. I hope that the House will see fit to provide these Connecticut families with the tax relief they need most.

STOP ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION AND PROTECT UNITED STATES JOBS

HON. BILL McCOLLUM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. McCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I am proud to introduce legislation which would improve the quality of the Social Security card and make it a crime to counterfeit work authorization documents. This is absolutely critical to our fight against illegal immigration. Several of my colleagues, including Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. STENHOLM, and Mr. HORN, join me in this effort.

Illegal immigrants come to the United States for one overwhelming reason: jobs. In response to this obvious magnet for illegal immigration, the 1986 immigration bill created employer sanctions, making it illegal to knowingly hire an illegal alien. That law requires everyone seeking employment in the United States to produce evidence of eligibility to work. One of the documents that may be produced together with a driver's license to prove this eligibility is the Social Security card. The primary reason employer sanctions are not working today is the rampant fraud in the documents to prove eligibility to work, specifically the Social Security card. H.R. 2202 would reduce the number of documents that may be produced from 29 to 6. This helps, but one of the six is still the Social Security card. As long as it can be easily counterfeited, employer sanctions will not work.

Why is it so important to make employer sanctions work? There are 4 million illegal aliens in the United States today. This number increases by 300,000 to 500,000 annually. Most illegals are non-English speaking, poorly educated, and lacking in marketable skills. Their numbers are so large in the communities and States where they are settling that they cannot be properly assimilated, and they are having a very negative social, cultural, and economic impact.

Even if the southwest border were sealed—which it can't be—it would not solve the illegal immigration problem. Nearly 50 percent of illegals are here because they entered on legal temporary visas and did not leave. The only way to stop illegals from coming, through the border or otherwise, is to eliminate the magnet of jobs. The only way to do that is to make employer sanctions work.

Mr. Speaker, the bill I am introducing today will make major strides in our efforts to make employer sanctions work. Until sanctions work, our fight against illegal immigration will be in vain.

A BEACON-OF-HOPE FOR ALL AMERICANS: RANDALL BLOOMFIELD

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, with the 1996 election behind us, this Nation has completed another cycle for the ongoing democratic process which makes America great. The electoral process and the public officials selected through this process are invaluable assets in our quest to promote the general welfare and to guarantee the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. It is important, however, Mr. Speaker, that we also give due recognition to the equally valuable contribution of non-elected leaders throughout our Nation. The fabric of our society is generally enhanced and enriched by the hard work done year after year by ordinary volunteer citizens. Especially in our inner city communities which suffer from long public policy neglect, local grassroots leaders provide invaluable service. These are men and women who engage in activities which generate hope. I salute all such heroes and heroines as Beacons-of-Hope.

Randall Bloomfield is one of these Beacons-of-Hope residing in the central Brooklyn community of New York City and New York State. Few doctors in central Brooklyn can match the impeccable record of achievement of Dr. Bloomfield.

Dr. Bloomfield is directly responsible for many community empowerment efforts. His vision, sincerity, and competence have resulted in the writing of proposals and the presentation of various studies that have educated the community. Over the years, he has made dozens of scholarly presentations on subjects such as "Current Approaches to Gynecological Chemotherapy." In addition, he is co-author of a proposal which gained funding for the Provident Neighborhood Health Center and has written numerous articles including one on Legislator-Physician relationships.

Throughout the years, Dr. Bloomfield has worked diligently in several positions that he found to be beneficial to his community. He currently serves as the chairman of the Moya Medical Scholarship Fund and is the co-chair of the Medgar Evers Medical Program.

Born in New York City, Dr. Bloomfield has served 2 years in the Army. He is a graduate of City College of New York and Downstate Medical Center. He is married to Edris L. Adams and the father of Diane Elizabeth and Robert Randall.

Randall Bloomfield is a Beacon-of-Hope for central Brooklyn and for all Americans.

INEQUITY IN THE TAX CODE

HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 7, 1997

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation designed to end an inequity that currently exists in our Tax Code. The Federal Unemployment Tax Act [FUTA] exempts certain churches and religious organizations operated by churches from having to pay State unemployment taxes. This exemption extends to schools directly operated by churches. Although church-operated schools are exempt, there is one class of religious schools which is presently not exempt—schools which, in equity and fairness, and for constitutional reasons, deserve this exemption.

The schools in this nonexempt class are religious schools which are not operated by churches, but are instead operated by lay boards of believers. Such schools are as pervasively religious as the church-operated schools. Indeed, nonchurch religious schools would not exist except for their religious mission and are, in every way except church affiliation, religiously indistinguishable from exempt schools. It is my understanding that these schools constitute about 20 percent of the membership of the Protestant evangelical schools in the country, and that, in addition, Catholic, Jewish, and other Protestant schools fall into this category.

Quite simply, these schools should not have to bear the burden of the FUTA tax. The intent and purpose of these schools are the same as those operated by churches. Not exempting such schools raises serious constitutional questions with respect to the free exercise and establishments clauses of the first amendment as well as the equal protection clause of the 14th amendment. Although an effort was made to bring this issue before the Supreme Court, the Court did not reach the merits and dismissed the case on other grounds. Recognizing the constitutional issues involved, the U.S. Department of Labor deferred the initiation of conformity proceedings for roughly 2 years against States which exempt these schools from State unemployment tax "until the constitutional issue is definitively resolved." The constitutional issue has yet to be resolved and the Department of Labor has since started enforcing its interpretation of the law.

My legislation will clarify this issue once and for all by simply amending the Internal Revenue Code to provide that service performed for an elementary or secondary school operated primarily for religious purposes is exempt from the Federal unemployment tax. Many Members of Congress will find religious schools in their district that fall into this non-exempt category, and, moreover, will find that these schools merit equitable and constitutional treatment. I would ask my colleagues to join me in an effort to bring equity to this section of the Tax Code.