

PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES

HON. LEE H. HAMILTON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Speaker, on March 17, 1997 I wrote to the President to express my support for his \$900 million budget request for the New Independent States [NIS] of the former Soviet Union. On April 11, 1997 I received a reply from the President, outlining why he believes his budget request for the NIS serves the American national interest, promotes market and democratic reform, and merits full bipartisan support. I commend the correspondence to the attention of my colleagues. The text follows:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 17, 1997.

Hon. WILLIAM J. CLINTON,
President of the United States, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: I write to commend you for your Fiscal Year 1998 budget request for increased funding for the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. I support your request for \$900 million, including your Partnership for Freedom initiative to encourage economic growth, sustain civil society and promote people-to-people linkages in the New Independent States.

Your direct involvement and leadership in 1993 made the difference in the decision by Congress to appropriate the very large sum of \$2.5 billion in assistance for the New Independent States. I believe your direct involvement and leadership will also be essential to win Congressional support for your FY 1998 budget request.

Democratic and market reform in Russia and the NIS are in the national security interests of the United States, and your assistance request promotes these critical U.S. interests.

I urge you to speak out in support of your budget request, and to resist earmarks that impair the effectiveness of the U.S. assistance program.

I look forward to working with you in support of this important initiative.

With best regards,

Sincerely,

LEE H. HAMILTON,
Ranking Democratic Member.

THE WHITE HOUSE,
Washington, April 11, 1997.

Hon. LEE H. HAMILTON,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR LEE: Thank you for your letter supporting my FY 1998 budget request for \$900 million to reinforce the next phase of reform in the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union. These funds will help us seize a historic opportunity: to turn the nascent foundations of market economies in the NIS into competitive, open markets that benefit their citizens and Americans alike.

Already, two-thirds of the people in the NIS live under democratically elected leaders in emerging market economies. Reforms are taking hold, but it is clear that the NIS still has a long way to go. Our timely, targeted investments in democracy and market economies can make the crucial difference.

Priority one is to tackle barriers to investment, lock in economic reform and, at the same time, open the region's vast resources to American business. The changes we support today in tax laws, commercial codes, ju-

dicial systems and legal protections against crime and corruption will resonate for decades to come. And these investments in good policy can leverage billions of dollars in trade and investment, which means jobs for Americans at home.

Priority two is to bolster generational change, and in so doing strengthen the social underpinnings of democracy. Our proposal will allow us to double people-to-people exchanges that will forge lasting ties with today's pioneers of reform and the young people who will be tomorrow's leaders. With carefully targeted support, we can work hand-in-hand with American foundations, universities, business associations and volunteer groups to nurture an emerging civil society. Indeed, the seeds planted today through thousands of reforms and grassroots networks will become a bedrock for pluralism and good governance.

This funding request also gives us the opportunity to complete structural reforms still under way in Ukraine, Central Asia and the Caucasus. Many of these countries face the challenge of completing their privatization programs, restructuring energy systems and unleashing the potential of small business. The impact will be seen in thousands of private sector jobs that will be the driving force for economic growth.

I am even more convinced, following the Helsinki Summit, that the time is ripe for this initiative. President Yeltsin pledged to pursue a bold new reform agenda to stimulate investment and growth in Russia. Our assistance can bolster him in this effort. And the leaders of Ukraine, Georgia and many of the region's other countries have committed to take steps to make reform irreversible.

This initiative—what I call a true Partnership for Freedom—has my strongest commitment. By helping to entrench democratic practices and market economies in the NIS, it advances our overarching national interest in seeing that these countries develop as partners of America. The Partnership for Freedom merits full bipartisan support.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT
OPPORTUNITIES ACT OF 1997

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN L. MICA

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 9, 1997

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify for the record the proper interpretation of this legislation as it relates to the judiciary. First, let me address the issue of assigning numerical ratings to applicants who are veterans. As amended, H.R. 240 does not require the judicial branch to employ a numerical rating system or assign numerical points to veterans. Nor does this legislation in any way authorize executive branch agencies to adjudicate complaints within the judiciary. All that H.R. 240 requires of the judicial branch is to provide the same degree of protection.

Second, concern was expressed about the appropriateness of the use of the term "regulation" for the judicial branch. Its use is appropriate. Although many of the statutes in title 28 regarding the judiciary and judicial procedures use terms such as "guidelines" or "procedures," a number also explicitly refer to "regulations" issued by the Judicial Conference. For example, 28 U.S.C. §§ 153(b), 155(b), 375(h),

1869(k). The use of this term in H.R. 240 is consistent with these statutes. To be sure, it is not the intent of this bill to require the Judicial Conference to follow Administrative Procedure Act—like procedures to which they are not otherwise subject.

Third, questions have been raised regarding the impact of the provision in this legislation that requires consultation with veterans' service organizations. This provision will not impair the independence of the judiciary. It is my understanding that the judicial branch already consults from time to time with various types of groups such as practitioners who routinely appear before the courts, through the Judicial Conference and through various circuit conferences. Veterans' service organizations have a keen understanding regarding veterans' employment problems and could offer valuable assistance to the Judicial Conference in formulating its policies. Finally, all that is required by this provision is consultation not agreement. None of these organizations would have veto power over any regulations promulgated by the judiciary under this provision of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, this concludes my remarks. As previously noted, my purpose in addressing the above issues is to present the proper interpretation of these provisions for the record.

A SALUTE TO RUTH HAYRE—DE-
FENDER OF PHILADELPHIA'S
CHILDREN

HON. THOMAS M. FOGLIETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. FOGLIETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ruth Hayre, grande dame of Philadelphia's public schools. Ms. Hayre recently announced her retirement from the Philadelphia School Board.

Her departure marks the end of a career in city schools that has spanned five decades. Ms. Hayre was an honor graduate of West Philadelphia High School at age 15. By the time she was 20, she had earned her master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania and was headed toward a career in education.

In 1931, Ms. Hayre was denied a teaching job in Philadelphia because of the color of her skin. She joined the school district a decade later as one of the first African-American professionals in the system. Hers was a life of firsts: the first black high school teacher, the first black principal, the first black district superintendent, and the first black woman named to the school board.

Always an advocate for high academic standards, Ruth Hayre in 1988 established a college scholarship program for needy high school students.

In 1946, when she first came to the old William Penn High School for Girls—which was then two-thirds black—Hayre was struck by the way African-American students were pushed into less demanding courses. She complained that one course she was assigned to teach had little value of direction. When she became principal of the school a decade later, she immediately abolished the course.

In 1991, she became the first black woman to serve as president of the Philadelphia School Board. As president, she spearheaded the effort to modernize Philadelphia's schools and to bring the district's curriculum and health education efforts into the 20th century.

As the Philadelphia Inquirer editorialized last week, "For decades, Ruth Wright Hayre's name has been synonymous with quality education. Her retirement next month for health reasons from the School Board of Philadelphia should inspire her colleagues to live up to the exciting standard she set."

In light of her many accomplishments in education, civil rights and the arts, and the void she leaves in lives of all Philadelphians, I am proud to honor Ruth Hayre.

TRIBUTE TO THE CRANBURY
LIONS CLUB 65TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL PAPPAS

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Cranbury Township Lions Club which is celebrating its 65th anniversary this year. Coincidentally, the Lions 65th anniversary coincides with Cranbury's tercentennial.

Having served as a Lion myself since 1982, I am well aware of the important role and contribution that the Lions Club makes in so many communities around our country.

We have heard before, right here in this Chamber, that the era of big government is over. But it is not good enough to just say it, we must act and reach out to our neighbors and those in need. The Lions have been doing just that for many years all over the country and the world.

We in this Nation have a choice. A choice to volunteer and help each other or let government assume that role. If big government is truly over, then we as individuals need to assume some of the responsibilities of government. We the people, need to help our fellow citizens who are in need.

The Lions Clubs around our Nation have consistently been involved in efforts to help those in need to see better through the collection and refurbishment of used eyeglasses, diabetes education, and a host of other activities. America's Lions are doing their share.

The Cranbury Lion's Club has for the past 8 years supported Project Quest, a campaign for drug prevention focused on Kindergarten through eighth grade students. Project Quest provides funding for teacher training and materials in the fight against illegal drugs and drug abuse among the community's youth.

It is these kinds of efforts, people in one community selflessly helping to solve its own problems, that will guide America into the next century. Since its founding in 1932, by Dr. Gerald Miller, the Cranbury Lions has quietly served as an example to us all.

I would like to congratulate some of the club's longest serving members, Judson Hagerty, Jay Schuyler, Arthur Danser, and George Conley. Each of these men have served the club and their community for over 40 years and together they represent close to 200 years of service.

Each year, the Cranbury Lions are responsible for hosting the township's Memorial Day parade. I want to pay early congratulations to Frank Brennan who is this year's parade committee chairman.

As this Congress continues to emphasize the need for service organizations and volunteers to assume a greater role, it will be orga-

nizations like the Cranbury Lions that year after year continue to bring about positive change.

Tomorrow night, the Cranbury Lions will hold their 65th anniversary dinner and I would like to extend my best wishes.

As America looks toward the 21st century, Lion's Clubs around the Nation stand ready and committed, full of energy, creativity, and solutions to help us become a better society and solve the problems that face our Nation. Among those groups is the Cranbury Lions.

PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT AND
LOW INCOME FAMILIES IN ELEC-
TRICITY DEREGULATION

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would create a national fund to provide matching grants to State and local programs promoting energy conservation, renewable energy resources like wind and solar power, and universal electricity service for low income, rural and other consumers for whom basic electricity service may be compromised by deregulation.

Nationwide, it is estimated that regulated utilities spend between \$6 and \$7.5 billion annually on energy conservation, renewable energy, and low income energy assistance programs. In the brave, new world of deregulated electricity markets, many of these public purposes could fall through the cracks. My bill provides a stable funding source to not only help maintain existing energy conservation, renewable energy and low income energy assistance programs, but to expand them around the Nation.

This is not a new Federal bureaucracy. It is a simple mechanism that will funnel money directly to programs crafted at the State and local level. Its cost to the Federal Treasury will be near zero.

The national program would be funded by a competitively neutral, non-bypassable transmission access charge paid by all electricity suppliers. The charge would be set to a level sufficient to fund qualifying State programs each year, but would be limited to no more than 2 tenths-of-a-cent per kilowatt-hour. The fund would be administered by a joint Federal-State board with oversight from the Department of Energy.

If fully utilized, the national electric systems benefits fund would provide between \$5 and \$6 billion each year in matching grants for locally designed energy efficiency, renewable and low income energy assistance programs. Electric utility industry deregulation without this important incentive-based program would be a disaster for the environment and for low income families.

TAXPAYER BROWSING
PROTECTION ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. BILL PAXON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 15, 1997

Mr. PAXON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1226, the Taxpayer Browsing Protection Act.

The American public should know that the problem of IRS agents browsing through taxpayer files is not exclusive to Washington, DC. Just last week in Buffalo, NY, it was revealed that at least 18 Buffalo-area IRS agents had used their access as Government officials to snoop through the tax files of thousands of upstate New Yorkers. And of these 18, only 2 were fired for their actions.

Quite simply, if the Government is going to compel personal information from its citizens, then there is a corresponding obligation to preserve the privacy of that information. Tax snooping is a clear case of abuse of Government authority, at the expense of others privacy and freedom.

The repugnance of Government agents rifling through our possessions without cause is precisely what sparked our constitutional prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure.

That is why I support H.R. 1226, the Taxpayer Browsing Protection Act, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE
MICHAEL A. MARTONE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to salute the Honorable Michael A. Martone, an Oakland County District Court judge from Troy, MI who will receive the Italian-American of the Year Award. This award, presented to Judge Martone by the Italian-American Study Group of Troy, is in recognition of his outstanding and continued commitment to the youth of our community.

Judge Martone has developed and implemented a unique alcohol and drug intervention program which actually brings the courtroom to middle and high schools. His program, dubbed "Court in the Schools: Critical Life Choices," illustrates to young adults the life-long consequences of failing to think critically and breaking the law. On September 9, 1996, Judge Martone gained national recognition for his efforts to establish the program around the nation when he was profiled on NBC's "Today Show." More than 12,500 students have participated in the program, not only in Michigan but in New York, Missouri, Florida, and Arkansas.

In addition to continuing his expansion of "Court in the Schools," Judge Martone remains active in the community as a volunteer with the Troy Community Coalition, Oakland County's HAVEN Courage House, and the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Judge Martone's accomplishments and outstanding contributions to the