

under conditions that would not be acceptable by today's standards. Now, as the work force at these sites is reduced, we need to act to assure prospective future employers that company health insurance rates will not be adversely affected if they hire these former defense workers. We also need to act to give these workers assurance that they'll have insurance coverage for work-related illnesses.

This is the right thing to do. America has already rightly recognized a special obligation to veterans and to those exposed to dangerous levels of radiation during the cold war—uranium miners, people who were downwind from nuclear tests, and "atomic veterans." Nuclear weapons workers deserve similar consideration, and this bill would provide that.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FARMER ESTATE TAX RELIEF ACT

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Farmer Estate Tax Relief Act of 1997. This bill is designed to make it easier for America's farming families to keep farming.

In discussions and visits with farmers throughout my district, I have learned that there is serious concern about the ability to pass farms on to future generations. The \$600,000 exclusion from estate taxes is not enough to preserve these small businesses that are so dependent upon large capital and land investments.

In Maryland, I understand that there are about 1,000 farms valued at more than \$1 million. A typical farm has anywhere from \$20,000 to \$200,000 worth of equipment.

It is a shame to hear stories of sons and daughters that must sell off part of their parents' farm simply to pay off the estate tax. While retaining the \$750,000 "special use" valuation, my legislation would raise the exclusion by \$1.4 million, allowing these heirs to exclude a total of \$2 million of farm assets.

To encourage these heirs to stay in one of America's most crucial professions, my bill offers the total higher exclusion only to heirs that continue farming for at least 10 years.

Maryland farmers have raised a second issue with me that is addressed by my bill. These independent business people, who often do tough, physical labor into their 70's and 80's, must sometimes sell farm assets to pay high medical bills.

The legislation I am introducing today would allow a one-time exclusion from capital gains taxation for up to \$500,000 of medical expenses. Taxpayers could apply this exclusion to the sale of farm or farm assets in the year of, before, or after the medical expenses occurred.

I know that there are many other Members that share my concerns on these issues. While estate taxes can also have a negative impact on other types of family businesses, I am most concerned about the impact on the men and women who put food on our tables.

As a nation, we cannot afford to push these farm families out of business and I am pleased to introduce this bill to provide them with relief. I urge prompt passage of the Farmer Estate Tax Relief Act.

EARTH DAY

HON. WALTER H. CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, the main reason I am an environmentalist is because of a little guy named David—my grandson. Environmentalism is all about what we leave him and his generation.

The district that I live in and represent is one of the most beautiful places on earth—the central coast of California. Living in Santa Barbara, the birthplace of the environmental movement, has taught me a vital lesson. It has taught me that wilderness, nature, and open space has a value beyond what money can measure. While nature can be measured for its trees that can be cut, its fish that can be caught, and its ore that can be mined, its value is priceless as a resource that renews the human spirit.

For this reason, the protection of our public lands is such an important concept. All Americans regardless of where they live, must have access to the natural beauty of this Nation.

The more time that we spend in cars and offices, moving too quickly to think, the more our spirits require the rejuvenation that comes from being outside in fresh air surrounded by beautiful sights. That is what I have enjoyed in my district for three decades. I want to ensure our future generations have the same opportunity.

We are all responsible for the stewardship of our resources—conservationists farmers, ranchers, outdoorsmen, and sportsmen. We must use our resources wisely—in a manner that does not destroy the environment in which we must continue to live. While the strategies for putting that stewardship action are always an issue of vigorous debate, we must work together and remember that the only end game is ensuring a healthy environment for our posterity.

Earth Day serves the purpose of reminding us all of our common responsibilities of good stewardship. Today, we can forget all else and focus on this end—passing on these priceless resources to our grandchildren and our grandchildren's children. It is our responsibility to ensure that they too can live in and find refuge in a healthy natural world. Our children deserve nothing less.

CONGRATULATIONS OFFICER FARRI

HON. VAN HILLEARY

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. HILLEARY. Mr. Speaker, Saturday, March 15, 1997 was a very special day in the life of my friend, U.S. Capitol Police Officer Vincent Farri. At 11:30 p.m. that night, Vincent's wife Christina gave birth to their first child, a boy named Richard Vincent. The child entered the world at the healthy weight of 8 pounds, 10.6 ounces, and a length of 21 inches.

I have known Vincent for some time now. He is an outstanding member of our Capitol police force. In addition to his fine service

overall, he has been a great help to me personally as I have brought constituents through the Capitol. I thank him for it, and I want to congratulate him on the birth of his son, Richard.

Knowing Vincent as I do, I can say with great confidence that he will be a terrific father. Young Richard may be unaware of it now, but someday he will understand how lucky he is to have such a good family raising him.

It is a true pleasure for me to enter these remarks into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I am privileged to have the opportunity to play a small part in this special time for the Farri family. How wonderful it must be for Vincent and Christina to enjoy firsthand the miracle of birth! To them I offer my heartfelt congratulations. To their son Richard, I offer my warmest welcome into this world as a citizen of the greatest country on Earth.

TACTILE CURRENCY FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

HON. RICHARD H. BAKER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that encourages the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to consider making Federal Reserve Notes tactually identifiable by the blind and visually impaired. This legislation enjoys considerable bipartisan support from my colleagues on the House Committee on Banking as well as other Members who share the same interests in assisting visually impaired individuals exert their independence.

In March 1994, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing commissioned the National Academy of Science to executive a study entitled "Currency Features for Visually Impaired People." This study explores methods of making currency more accessible for all Americans.

The report concluded that the needs of the blind could be better served if further study on specific changes such as size, color, and tactile marks be initiated.

Currently, the Department of Treasury is engaged in efforts to redesign the Federal Reserve note to prevent counterfeiting. Indeed, the new \$100 bill already been issued nationwide. With this window of opportunity upon us, I believe Congress has the change to assist the millions of visually impaired Americans who strive to live independently by making their money more accessible to them.

My bill simply endorses the efforts of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing to study cost-effective tactile changes in Federal Reserve notes and encourages the incorporation of those changes in the national currency.

My bill does not cost the Federal Government any money, nor does it impose and undue, unfair mandates.

Such a minor change in currency will have a significant impact on the independence of visually impaired Americans. Further, a tactual mark can serve other purposes, such as being an additional counterfeit deterrent.

Visually impaired individuals are capable, independent people whose valuable contributions touch all of our lives. It is important that all Americans are afforded equal opportunities to perform at the best of their abilities. My bill

stresses that importance. I hope all Members will join me to pass this legislation.

JONES ACT RESOLUTION

HON. GERALD B.H. SOLOMON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, today, I and my distinguished colleague on the Rules Committee, Mr. MOAKLEY, join a bipartisan group of our colleagues in introducing a resolution that will strongly reaffirm the Congress' support for the Jones Act—section 27 of the Merchant Marine Act of 1920.

The Jones Act has its origins in the earliest days of our Nation. Its basic requirement is that any vessel used to transport cargo between ports in the United States must be built in the United States, registered under the U.S. flag, and carrying a crew made up of U.S. citizens. Relying on American ships and crewmembers, the Jones Act provides tangible benefits for our national defense. The Jones Act fleet provides the experience needed to maintain trained and loyal American-citizen merchant mariners. Our merchant marine vessels, both private sector and Government owned, rely on the abilities of these merchant mariners to operate. Without the Jones Act, we jeopardize our national security interests and place our men and women in the Armed Forces in tremendous danger.

As important as our national security, our Jones Act fleet is also an essential part of the transportation industry in this country. The fleet contributes approximately \$15 billion a year to our economy and employs 124,000 American workers. Because of the Jones Act, the United States will always have a safe and reliable maritime system.

With these important benefits in mind, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support this resolution and to reaffirm in the strongest possible terms our support for the Jones Act.

This resolution spells out, loud and clear, that Congress will not allow the Jones Act to be weakened. It says that we will not allow substandard foreign-flag vessel—and their foreign crewmembers who are paid less than minimum wage—to push the U.S.-flag fleet out of its own market. It declares that if we did not have the Jones Act, these same foreign-flag vessels, free of virtually all U.S. laws and taxes, would also be able to compete unfairly against our domestic trucking, railroad, and pipeline industries. This resolution says that we will not allow that to happen.

This resolution says we are not going to hand over an entire American industry to foreign operators. More than 40 other maritime nations have laws similar to the Jones Act, and in this country we have similar laws that preserve our other transportation markets—like trucking and aviation—to American companies and American workers. With this resolution, Congress reasserts this Nation's commitment to maintaining a strong domestic maritime industry—with American ships and American workers.

This resolution promotes fairness to American businesses and American working men and women. It promotes our commitment to a strong national defense with no cost to the taxpayer. It promotes a safe and reliable na-

tional transportation system. And it promotes a vital sector of our economy. I ask my colleagues to join in supporting this resolution.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RHODE ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

HON. ROBERT A. WEYGAND

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to your attention the momentous occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Rhode Island Audubon Society.

Founded as the State's first environmental organization, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island was originally established to protect birds from the feather trade. It now actively addresses a wide range of natural resources and environmental issues and is dedicated to advocacy, education, natural area protection, and land management. The Audubon Society of Rhode Island independently protects over 8,000 acres of coastal property and woodlands of diverse natural habitats. Each year, over 15,000 students and teachers statewide participate in environmental education programs ranging from classroom sessions, natural history field trips, summer camps, and teacher workshops and trainings.

Serving the second most densely populated State in the Nation, one with limited natural resources and an industrial economy, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island actively fulfills its environmental stewardship through preservation and protection of Rhode Island's treasured natural heritage.

With 3,500 members, the Audubon Society of Rhode Island is a very respected voice in local ecological issues.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, the members of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island and the State of Rhode Island, in recognizing the momentous occasion of the founding of the Audubon Society of Rhode Island, and expressing our warmest appreciation and thanks for a century of dedication to improving the quality of environment for wildlife and for humans alike. We wish them another 100 years of success.

ON THE DEATH OF FORMER ISRAELI PRESIDENT CHAIM HERZOG

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, we were all saddened today to learn of the passing of the former President of Israel, Chaim Herzog. Mr. Herzog's life mirrored the birth and early history of the State of Israel. During his career, he served as a distinguished soldier, author, and diplomat.

Mr. Herzog was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1918, the son of a rabbi, and immigrated to mandatory Palestine in 1935. He served as an officer in the British Army during the Second World War, and landed with Allied troops at Normandy in 1944.

Later he served with distinction in defending Israel from Arab attack during Israel's war of

independence in 1948. After the June 1967 war, Mr. Herzog was appointed Israel's first military governor of the West Bank.

In the 1970's, he served at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, and was later named Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations. He was the author of several books, including "Israel's Finest Hour," a historical account of the 1967 war. Mr. Herzog was elected Israel's President in 1983.

Mr. Speaker, Chaim Herzog has been described by his contemporaries as "a man of war who loved peace." The American people extend to his family and to the people of Israel their deepest condolences for the passing of a man who has helped shape the history of Israel, and who was a lover of peace.

[From the Washington Post]

FORMER ISRAELI PRESIDENT HERZOG DIES

(By Dafna Linzer)

JERUSALEM (AP)—Chaim Herzog, Israel's longest-serving president as well as a distinguished soldier, author and diplomat, died today. He was 78.

Herzog suffered heart failure after contracting pneumonia during a recent visit to the United States, said Rachel Sofer, spokeswoman of Tel Hashomer Hospital in Tel Aviv.

When Herzog became Israel's sixth president in 1983, the country was divided by the war in Lebanon and facing international isolation. During his 10 years in the largely ceremonial post, Herzog made 45 visits abroad and was credited with helping to shape Israel's image internationally.

He got mixed reviews, however, when he set free Shin Bet secret service agents in 1986 who were accused of murdering two Palestinian militants. Four years later, he pardoned members of the Jewish underground convicted of attacking Palestinians.

Speaking in 1993, Herzog said his pardons saved the morale and effectiveness of Shin Bet after the scandal known as "Bus 300." The agency had tried to frame Yitzhak Mordechai, the current defense minister but at the time an army commander, for the deaths of two Palestinian bus hijackers. It was later learned that Shin Bet ordered the killings.

Born Vivian Herzog in Belfast on Sept. 17, 1918, Herzog was Ireland's bantamweight boxing champion before immigrating to pre-state Palestine in 1935. His father, Isaac Herzog, became the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi when Israel gained independence in 1948.

During World War II, he was an officer in the British army, landing with the allied troops in Normandy. He was one of the last British officers to question Nazi Gen. Heinrich Himmler before he committed suicide in prison.

President Ezer Weizman, who served in battle with Herzog in the 1948 War of Independence, described him as a "talented man and good friend."

Shimon Peres, the former premier and Labor Party leader, called Herzog "a man of war who loved peace."

"Herzog was the most statesman-like man in Israel. He was a military man, a president, son of rabbis and man of the modern age," Peres said on Israel radio.

Following the war, he was named the first military governor of the West Bank, which Israel captured from Jordan in the 1967 Middle East War. The aristocratic Herzog won plaudits for his commentaries during the war, when his balanced and soothing reports put the nation at ease.

Later, he became the first head of Israeli military intelligence, served as U.S. military attache in Washington, and in 1975, was appointed Israel's ambassador to the United Nations.