

summer, winter, or fall. Hunger doesn't know the days of the week, or the months of the year. During the Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season, our thoughts and our hearts turn to the less fortunate in our own communities. But, sadly, hunger is a year round concern and food pantries can be dangerously depleted during the spring and summertime.

That's why it is so important that all Americans are aware that on May 10, the National Association of Letter Carriers [NALC], in conjunction with the U.S. Postal Service, the AFL-CIO, and the United Way, will be collecting nonperishable food items for distribution to local food pantries. Postal customers simply place the food items by their mailboxes on the 10th, and the letter carriers pick up the items when they make their rounds. This is the largest 1 day food drive in the Nation, and proudly, I might add, my hometown, Milwaukee, ranked third in the Nation last year by collecting over 1 million pounds of food for distribution.

Let's all spread the news, far and wide, to the cities, suburbs, towns, and rural areas, as hunger affects many of our neighborhoods and hometowns. When doing the weekly grocery shopping for the second week of May, please join my wife and I by adding to the shopping cart a few extra cans of soup, vegetables and fruit, for distribution via the Letter Carrier food drive May 10.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PIERSON HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS TEAM OF SAG HARBOR, LONG ISLAND FOR ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL ROBOTICS COMPETITION

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 30 students and 4 teachers who comprise the Pierson High School robotics team, of Sag Harbor, Long Island, for their showing at the National High School Robotics competition, held between April 9–13 at the Epcot Center at Walt Disney World, Orlando, FL.

Competing against 115 teams from across America, including several magnet high schools that specialize in science and technology, Pierson High School finished 15th at the national competition in Orlando. The competition's sponsor—U.S. For Inspiration, Recognition, Science and Technology [FIRST]—provided each of the 115 schools with the same materials and parts list and asked each to accomplish the same task: to construct a robot that would pick up a number of inner tubes and place them inside a hexagonal goal. Using radio transmitters and receivers, the students were scored on the number of inner tubes they safely maneuvered from a remote location into the goal.

What makes the accomplishments of the Pierson High School team so remarkable is that they constructed a robot that outperformed machines built by teams from schools with much larger enrollments, many of whom enjoyed corporate sponsorship and assistance. To raise the \$6,000 entry fee, travel, and lodging costs, the students from Pierson

High School held garage sales, raised funds from local businesses, and were helped by their schools PTA, who held a fundraising brunch. Symbol Technologies, of Bohemia, Long Island, helped Pierson's with a small grant. Many of the students also came up with some of their own money to pay their way to Orlando, and to the regional competition at New Jersey's Rutgers University.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in saluting the 30 students on the Pierson High School Robotics team, for their performance at the national robotics competition. As America enters the new millennium, an era that will be dominated by microchips and robots, it is these young scientists who will create the new technologies that we can now only imagine. By their talent, hard work and ingenuity, America will remain the greatest force in the global marketplace. Congratulations, Pierson High School.

CONGRATULATIONS TO WESLEY GAINS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN PARAMOUNT, CALIFORNIA

HON. STEPHEN HORN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker. I rise today to praise the Wesley Gains Elementary School in the Paramount Unified School District. It is being recognized by the California Department of Education as a California title I achieving school. Wesley Gains is also a candidate for the competitive Title I National Recognition Schools Award.

This award is sponsored by the National Association of State Coordinators of Compensatory Education. The Association's goal is to focus the Nation's attention on programs in high poverty areas where disadvantaged students demonstrate unusual success in raising their achievement levels in basic and more advanced skills.

Paramount School Superintendent Michele Lawrence and Wesley Gains Principal Susan Lance have worked hard to develop and maintain the Gains community, which is not just physical buildings, but a philosophy that underscores the importance of education as a joint venture between the home, the school, and the community. The goal of the Gains community is to prepare students to become responsible citizens and productive members of the society. To achieve this, students need to be proficient in reading, writing, mathematics, and have a positive character behavior—which includes good work habits, teamwork, perseverance, honesty, self-reliance, and consideration for others.

Through several key features, the Gains community has been able to achieve these goals. The primary component has been a balanced literacy program, utilizing title I funds. All existing and incoming teachers receive training in specific, researched-based reading and writing strategies, including theory, program expectations, and implementation expectations. Additionally, Wesley Gains has five reading recovery teachers who work with targeted at risk first graders and provides assistance to staff, as well as a site literacy teacher, who acts as a partner-teacher to all staff.

Parent involvement is a critical part of the effort, and programs for parent-training help to support students' reading efforts at home. Program examples are "I Have A Parent Who Reads To Me" for kindergarten and first grades; "WOW! I Can Read" for second grades; and "Book Bridges" for off-track students. A parent task force is very active with the site-based decision-making model and coordinates support activities, such as a minimum of three parent visitation days and Family Nights each year. One example of this program's success is the parent attendance rate at parent conferences: more than 97 percent of Wesley Gains parents attend their parent-teacher conferences.

The overall success has been achieved and maintained regardless of some district wide changes: extension of the school day; implementation of a four-track, year-round schedule, adding grades 6 to 8 to Wesley Gains' K–5 campus, redefining each school's attendance boundaries, which at Wesley Gains led to an increase of 850 new students; and implementing a new school uniform policy.

It is obvious that Wesley Gains deserves this honor. The students, teachers, and staff have worked hard and it has paid off. They recognized where their focus needed to be, devised a plan that efficiently used their resources, implemented their plan, and continue to reevaluate and reassess the quality of work they do, making changes as they go. And I am pleased to see that they recruited the best support group possible: parents. The level of commitment Wesley Gains parents show has been, without a doubt, a key to their success. I would wish that all schools could have as much parental support as Wesley Gains does. After all, it will take the entire community to educate and prepare our children for the 21st century.

I congratulate Superintendent Lawrence, Principal Lance, the entire staff, faculty, parents and students of the Gains community. I wish them many more years of success.

"WE THE PEOPLE" PROGRAM

HON. ROBERT A. WEYGAND

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. WEYGAND. Mr. Speaker, on April 26–28, 1997, more than 1,200 students from 50 States and the District of Columbia will be in Washington, DC, to compete in the national finals of the We The People . . . The Citizen and the Constitution Program. I am proud to announce that the class from West Warwick High School from West Warwick will represent the Second Congressional District of Rhode Island. These young scholars have worked diligently to reach the national finals by winning local competitions in their home State.

The distinguished members of the team representing Rhode Island are: Jamie Amaral, Mary Asselin, Jonathan Bassi, Justin Broz, John Caressimo, Brian Carr, Andrew Costanza, Krystle Couto, Bethany DeBlois, Candice Felske, John Johnson, Jonathan Juneau, Jamie Kullberg, Kristin Larocque, Gina Musto, Meghan O'Brien, Ryan O'Grady, Stephanie Paquet, Erica Ricci, Hillary Sisson, Derek Tevyaw, Kevin Willette, Kristen Wolslegel, Man Yu, and Debra Zenofsky.

I also would like to recognize their teacher, Michael Trofi, who deserves much of the credit for the success of the team. The district coordinator, Carlo Gamba, and the State coordinator, Henry Cote, also contributed a significant amount of time and effort to help the team reach the national finals.

The We The People . . . The Citizen and Constitution Program is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The 3-day national competition simulates a congressional hearing in which students' oral presentations are judged on the basis of their knowledge of constitutional principles and their ability to apply them to historical and contemporary issues.

Administered by the Center for Civic Education, the We The People program, now in its 10th academic year, has reached more than 75,000 teachers, and 24 million students nationwide at the upper elementary, middle, and high school levels. Members of Congress and their staff enhance the program by discussing current constitutional issues with students and teachers.

The We the People program provides an excellent opportunity for students to gain an informed perspective on the significance of the U.S. Constitution and its place in our history and lives. I wish these students the best of luck in the national finals and look forward to their continued success in the years ahead.

HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT OVERCHARGES: WHY WE NEED TO REFORM MEDICARE'S PAYMENT SYSTEM

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the President's budget proposes to reform a major defect in Medicare—the ability of hospital outpatient departments [HOPDs] to overcharge beneficiaries. Due to the way the law is worded, patients today pay—on average—about 45 percent of the allowable cost of a hospital outpatient procedure. They should be paying 20 percent. Unless fixed, the problem will just get worse and worse, with seniors and the disabled paying more and more. Simply put, the problem arises because Medicare pays the hospital on the basis of reasonable cost, while the beneficiary is stuck with 20 percent of charges—and charges can be anything the hospital wants to say they are.

On February 4, Representative COYNE and myself introduced a bill, H.R. 582, to provide for an immediate correction of this serious Medicare beneficiary problem. I urge the Budget Committee, as it considers the size of the Medicare budget cuts, to make an allowance for the fixing of this problems.

In the meantime, the public should be advised to shop around for a better price than the HOPDs offer. Of the roughly 7,000 procedures that are done in HOPDs, 2,700 are also done safely and competently in ambulatory surgical centers [ASCs], where the price is usually much lower—and where the beneficiaries copay is limited to 20 percent.

Following are some examples of the difference to a patient in using an ASC instead

of an HOPD. Newspapers, the electronic media, and consumer groups could do a great service to the Nation's seniors and disabled by checking on these prices in their local market and advertising the difference to seniors. Caveat emptor—big time.

COMPARISON OF HOSPITAL AND ASC FEES

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE NO. 1

Description:

Procedure: Inguinal Hernia Repair.

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CPT Code: 49505.

Date: June 18, 1996.

	Comparative payments—	
	ASC	Local hospital
Retail Charge	\$1,816	\$3,171
HCFA Approved .....	.....	3,171
HCFA Payment	587	2,537
Patient Co-payment	117	634

COMPARISON OF HOSPITAL AND ASC FEES

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE NO. 2

Description:

Procedure: Breast Biopsy.

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CPT Code: 19120.

Date: July 29, 1996.

	Comparative payments—	
	ASC	Local hospital
Retail Charge	\$899	\$1,237
HCFA Approved .....	.....	1,237
HCFA Payment	473	989
Patient Co-payment	95	247

COMPARISON OF HOSPITAL AND ASC FEES

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE NO. 3

Description:

Procedure: Cataract w/IOL.

Location: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

CPT Code: 66984.

Date: August 15, 1996.

	Comparative payments—	
	ASC	Local hospital
Retail Charge	\$1,419	\$4,417
HCFA Approved .....	.....	1,617
HCFA Payment	914	1,294
Patient Co-payment	183	323

COMPARISON OF HOSPITAL AND ASC FEES

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE NO. 4

Description:

Procedure: Colonoscopy w/Tumor Removal.

Location: Pasadena, California.

CPT Code: 45385.

Date: January 23, 1996.

	Comparative payments—	
	ASC	Local hospital
Retail Charge .....	.....	\$1,583
HCFA Approved .....	.....	1,186
HCFA Payment	\$442	1,186
Patient Co-payment	88	396

TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING—APRIL 21, 1997

HON. THOMAS J. MANTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the second anniversary of the

Oklahoma City bombing. On April 19, 1995, a car bomb exploded outside the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, OK, killing 169 people and injuring hundreds more. This act of cowardice was an attack on innocent children and defenseless citizens, and struck at the very heart of our democracy.

This act of terrorism, the worst in the Nation's history on American soil, shocked, frightened, angered and saddened the citizens of Oklahoma and the United States. But throughout this time of hardship, the acts of courage, compassion, and professionalism by the citizens of Oklahoma and countless volunteers that descended upon the Murrah building are indelibly etched in the memories of people all over the world. These heroes, which included law enforcement officers, firefighters, search and rescue professionals, doctors, nurses, and volunteers throughout the country, gave selflessly in providing comfort and compassion to the victims of the attack and their families.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress who hails from New York City, the site of the World Trade Center Bombing 4 years ago, I know the fear and loss which these cowardly acts can have on a community. While the devastation which occurred in Oklahoma City is far greater than that which New York sustained, I know the people of New York have a special affinity for the suffering experienced by the families and friends of the victims of the Oklahoma tragedy.

I think all Americans agree that this victimization of innocent people is a trend which we cannot allow to continue. That is why I introduced and urge my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring H.R. 538, the Explosives Fingerprinting Act, which would require explosive manufacturers to use high technology additives—taggants—in their explosives. These taggants would serve as identifying signatures which show where and when a particular explosive material was made. This legislation, which I originally offered during the 103d Congress in response to the World Trade Center bombing, is supported by major law enforcement agencies, including the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to give our law enforcement officials a valuable new tool in their arsenal. I would encourage my colleagues to join me as cosponsors of this important legislation, thereby taking a small step toward making sure another terrorist act like the bombing in Oklahoma City does not occur again.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would like to again express my deepest sympathies to the families and friends of the victims of Oklahoma City on this the second anniversary of the Oklahoma City bombing.

INS AND CITIZENSHIP

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 23, 1997

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss an issue which disturbs me greatly. Just 3 months ago the Justice Department reported that the Immigration and Naturalization Service allowed some 180,000 people to become citizens without fully completing the required criminal background checks.