

helped countless numbers of San Francisco Bay area residents with problems ranging from fixing the burdensome Tax Code to fixing a burnt-out street light. For the past 20 years, Al Teglia's humor, compassion, and dedication to duty has been a source of inspiration to all of us who serve the public.

Al Teglia served five terms in the Daly City Council and four terms as mayor. He has served on numerous boards and commissions including the Airport Land Use Committee, California School Board Association, League of California Cities, the Peninsula Joint Powers Board, and many others. He was instrumental in negotiating the BART [Bay Area Rapid Transit] Colma extension and spearheaded the Orthodontia Program for San Mateo County. His outstanding achievements have been recognized by awards from the San Mateo Hispanic Council, the Italian American Federation, San Mateo Easter Seals, and Daly City Jaycee to name just a few.

The son of Genoese immigrants, Al Teglia has lived on the San Mateo Peninsula all his life. He and his wife of 43 years, Verna, share a love and joy for the bay area community. Too often these days people complain about this problem or that situation without ever lifting a finger to try and help solve it. People like Al Teglia remind us that a community is only as strong as the people in it. Al has given back so much to the community which raised him, we should all look to him as an example. People can actually point to Al Teglia and say, "He helped make my life better." This is the penultimate compliment for a public servant.

I hold Al Teglia in the highest regard. There is no task too daunting and no issue too small. With an uncompromising dedication to duty and service, he has touched many lives in the San Francisco Bay area. His presence on the Daly City Council will be sorely missed, but I am pleased he will remain active in the community. His undying devotion and dogmatic determination to serve his community should serve as inspiration to all who aspire to public service.

TRIBUTE TO STAFF SERGEANT LEWIS F.M. SCOTT

HON. FLOYD SPENCE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. SPENCE. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for me to pay tribute today to a truly exceptional Marine, Staff Sergeant Lewis F.M. Scott, who will soon complete his assignment as the Marine Corps' congressional liaison staff non-commissioned officer. For the past 3½ years, Staff Sergeant Scott has provided a tremendous service to the Members of Congress and to all of our constituents. His dedication and professionalism, coupled with his warm personality, have endeared him to many of us on Capitol Hill, and we will miss him very much.

A native of Felton, DE, Lewis Scott enlisted in the Marine Corps on January 28, 1983, and attended recruit training in Parris Island, SC. After boot camp and specialty training in administration, he was assigned to the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center at 29 Palms, CA, as a clerk for the 3d Assault Amphibian Battalion. In April of 1985, he received orders to the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion in

Okinawa, Japan where he served with distinction until his transfer to the Logistics Base in Barstow, CA 1 year later. From July 1988 until June 1991, he served with the 12th Marine Corps District Headquarters in San Francisco before being reassigned to Headquarters, Marine Corps here in Washington where he served for 2 years.

On May 30, 1996, Staff Sergeant Scott reported for duty with the Marine Corps' House Liaison Office and immediately assumed responsibilities for coordinating, executing and supervising numerous tasks normally assigned to commissioned officers. He often served as a spokesperson on Marine Corps issues and rapidly established a reputation for exactness, professionalism, and integrity among Members of Congress, congressional staff members, and his peers in the Liaison Office.

During his career on Capitol Hill, Staff Sergeant Scott responded to over 4,000 telephonic inquiries from over 900 Congressional offices throughout the country and ensured that our constituents received timely and complete answers. He was instrumental in planning, coordinating and escorting Members and congressional staff on fact finding trips. In short, Staff Sergeant Scott's performance is consistent with the quality performance we have come to expect from our U.S. Marines.

During Staff Sergeant Scott's 14-year career, he and his family made many sacrifices for this Nation. I would like to thank them all—Lewis, his lovely wife, Angelia, and their three children, Christopher, Lewis, and Shannon for their contributions to the Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, Staff Sergeant Scott is a great attribute to the U.S. Marine Corps and to the country he so faithfully serves. As he prepares to depart for new challenges on an unaccompanied tour in Okinawa, Japan, I know that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join me in wishing him every success, as well as fair winds and following seas.

AMERICA'S VETERANS HAVE EARNED EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING AND SMALL BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, it has been my privilege to serve on the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs since I was first elected to Congress 4 years ago, and I look forward to continuing that service in the 105th Congress. I asked to serve on the Veterans' Affairs Committee because I believe that the men and women who serve in our Nation's Armed Forces are special members of our American family. Because of their service, the rest of us are able to fully enjoy the freedoms on which our country was founded. We have a unique debt to our veterans, and, as a member of the Veteran's Committee, I have worked to ensure that that debt is repaid.

On January 7, 1997, the first day of the 105th Congress, I introduced three bills of particular importance to veterans and members of the Reserves and National Guard. We have a longstanding national commitment to provide special assistance for veterans who want employment and training assistance, and these bills will help us fulfill that commitment.

Last year, a Supreme Court ruling mistakenly eliminated a portion of the job protection we have provided for 50 years for people who serve in the Reserves and National Guard. Because of this ruling, citizen soldiers who are also employees of a State government are at risk of not being restored to their civilian jobs following their military service. H.R. 166, the Veterans' Job Protection Act, would restore re-employment protection for these individuals by making it clear that States must obey the law and reestablish these men and women in their State jobs when they return from their military duties.

The Veterans' Training and Employment Bill of Rights Act of 1997, H.R. 167, would provide that service-disabled veterans and veterans who serve in combat areas would be "first in line" for federally funded training-related services and programs. Under current law, veterans are often underserved by national programs such as the Job Training Partnership Act [JTPA]. Veterans' service organizations have told us, for example, that program managers sometimes turn veterans away from JTPA dislocated worker programs because they mistakenly assume that veterans receive the same services from the Department of Veterans Affairs. My bill would reinforce our commitment to provide special training assistance for veterans and make it clear that eligible veterans have earned a place at the front of the line.

Additionally, H.R. 167 would update the Federal Contractor Job Listing Program. Under current law, Federal contractors with contracts of \$10,000 or more must make special efforts to employ certain qualified disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era. These contractors are also required to file annual reports with the Department of Labor [DOL] regarding the number of veterans they have hired. H.R. 167 would increase the contract level to \$100,000. This level would reduce the number of reports filed and enable DOL to more carefully review and evaluate the contractor information.

This bill would also establish the first effective appeals process for veterans who believe their rights have been violated under certain veterans' employment-related programs. My bill would require the Secretary of Labor to assist veterans who think Federal contractors have not met their obligation to hire veterans. The Secretary would also be required to help veterans who believe they were not given preference for enrollment in Federal training programs. A veteran could also file a complaint directly with a district court. H.R. 167 would provide the "teeth" that have been missing from some veterans' training programs and would go a long way toward ensuring that veterans' rights are respected.

Many veterans have told me they would like to own a small business, and our national economy would certainly be strengthened if more veterans were able to establish their own companies. Because of this, I introduced H.R. 168, the Veterans' Entrepreneurship Promotion Act of 1997. This bill is designed to assist the development of small businesses owned by disabled and other eligible veterans. Under this measure, a program would be established to help eligible veteran-owned small businesses compete for Federal Government contracts. Additionally, because adequate capital is absolutely necessary for business start-up and expansion, H.R. 168 would establish a

guaranteed loan program in the Small Business Administration for veteran-owned businesses. Also included in my bill is a provision to establish a program of training, counseling, and management assistance for veterans interested in establishing a small business. Veterans are smart, disciplined, and hard workers—the kind of people we need to strengthen and expand our economy—and those who want to pursue self-employment should be supported and encouraged.

These bills would significantly increase training and employment opportunities for those unique members of our American family—our Nation's veterans. These special men and women have more than earned the assistance that would be provided by these measures.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the representatives of the major veterans' service organizations whose assistance in the development of these bills was invaluable. I also want to say that, as the ranking Democratic member of the Subcommittee on Benefits, I look forward to working closely with the chairman of the subcommittee and the chairman of the full Veterans' Affairs Committee on these and other issues of importance to America's veterans.

UNIVERSAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES MUST MEET THE NEEDS OF NATIVE AMERICANS

HON. BILL RICHARDSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today, I introduced a House Resolution expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that universal telecommunications service can only be met if the needs of Native Americans are addressed and policies are implemented with the cooperation of tribal governments. It is important that we keep pressure on decision makers within the Federal Communications Commission [FCC] to address the needs of Native Americans.

As the FCC prepares to adopt a policy on universal service, the implementation process of the Telecommunications Act reaches a critical stage. I believe it is important to make it perfectly clear that the intent of Congress can only be fulfilled if the universal service policies or procedures established to implement the Act address the telecommunications needs of low-income Native Americans, including Alaskan Natives.

While I concur with many of the universal service recommendations made by the Joint Federal-State Board, there are many questions left unanswered.

A genuine universal service policy will only take hold if it can be implemented at reasonable costs. These cost-effective solutions are best developed with the cooperation of tribal governments.

When congress enacted the Telecommunications Act in February, great emphasis was placed on ensuring the delivery of telecommunications services, including advanced telecommunications and information services, to all regions of the Nation. This principle of universal service is designed to address the exceptional needs of rural, insular, and high-

cost areas and make sure those services are available at reasonable and affordable rates.

This policy was established in the belief that telecommunications services have become essential to, education, public health, and public safety of all people within the United States.

Indian and Alaskan Native people live in some of the most geographically remote areas of the country, with 50 percent of Indian and Alaskan Native people living in Oklahoma, California, South Dakota, Arizona, New Mexico, Alaska, and Washington.

Indian poverty in reservation areas is 3.9 times the national average rate. The average phone penetration rates for rural Native Americans is only 50 percent. The actual penetration rates are often much lower than 50 percent—for example, the Navajo Nation estimates that 65 percent of its citizens do not have telephones. What phone service there is in Indian country is often sub-standard and prohibitively expensive.

there is a continuing need for universal service in Indian country and for tribal governments to be directly involved in providing these services.

Among the recommendations in the 1995 Office of Technology Assessment Report, "Telecommunications Technology and Native Americans" is a strengthened Federal/tribal government partnership in the telecommunications field to provide better services to persons in Indian country and to enable tribes to be direct providers of telecommunications services.

Now is the time to recognize the critical role that tribal governments can and must play in the implementation of universal service objectives.

The FCC has 4 months to implement the recommendations made by the Joint Federal-State Board. With the input of tribal leaders, I intend to introduce legislation that will codify the positive recommendations of the Board. This will encourage the FCC to implement a strategy of universal service that truly addresses the needs of tribes.

CAVEAT EMPTOR: LAW AGAINST SALE OF DUPLICATE INSURANCE POLICIES TO SENIORS WEAKENED

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, just a word of warning to seniors: The law protecting against the sale of worthless, duplicative insurance policies which do not pay out benefits was weakened last year in the Kassebaum-Kenedy bill.

The following memo from the Institute on Law and Rights of Older Adults makes the deception clear. Congress legislated that 2 + 2 = 3 in saying that policies which "coordinate" with Medicare and don't have to pay out benefits are not "duplicate" policies.

PROTECTIONS AGAINST SALE OF DUPLICATE POLICIES WEAKENED

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 contains a provision that further weakens protections against selling health insurance policies to Medicare beneficiaries which provide benefits that du-

plicate their existing coverage. The new law changes the disclosure statement given to Medicare beneficiaries which was developed to warn them against purchasing a health insurance policy that duplicates Medicare coverage. The current statement: "Important Notice to Persons on Medicare—This Insurance Duplicates Some Medicare Benefits," has been changed to: "Some health care services paid for by Medicare may also trigger the payment of benefits under this policy."

This change, along with federal legislation passed in 1994 which allows insurance companies to offer policies containing benefits which duplicate private health benefits held by a Medicare beneficiary as long as the policy pays without regard to the other health benefits, may result in beneficiaries' being sold policies that duplicate Medicare and their private coverage and thus are of little value. Note that selling a new Medigap policy to someone who already has a Medigap policy is still against the law unless the person plans to drop the previously held Medigap policy. While the practice of insurance companies' selling policies (other than Medigap) to Medicare beneficiaries which pay benefits without regard to their other health coverage is allowed, the policies must include the following: "This policy must pay benefits without regard to other health benefit coverage to which you may be entitled under Medicare or other insurance."

The new law clarifies that a policy providing long-term care benefits (defined as nursing home and non-institutional coverage, nursing home only or home care only) which coordinates benefits with Medicare or other private health insurance policies (coordinates means that the long-term care policy pays secondary benefits or does not pay benefits for services covered under Medicare or other health insurance coverage) is not considered duplicate coverage. Additionally, long-term care policies must now include the statement, "Federal law requires us to inform you that in certain situations this insurance may pay for some benefits also covered by Medicare."

MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 9, 1997

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation which imposes tougher mandatory minimum sentences for those individuals who possess firearms while committing a violent or drug-related crime.

Under current law, an individual who uses or carries a firearm while committing a violent or drug-related crime automatically receives a mandatory 5-year sentence in addition to the sentence for the crime in question. However, a recent Supreme Court decision stated that the criminal must actively employ the weapon in order to trigger the mandatory sentence. This decision has hampered an effective tool for law enforcement.

This legislation will allow Federal prosecutors to apply the mandatory sentence even if the criminal does not fire or brandish the weapon. In addition, the mandatory sentence is now increased from 5 to 10 years. If the gun is fired, the sentence is 20 years, and the death penalty will apply if someone is killed. These mandatory sentences are imposed in addition to any for the actual crime.